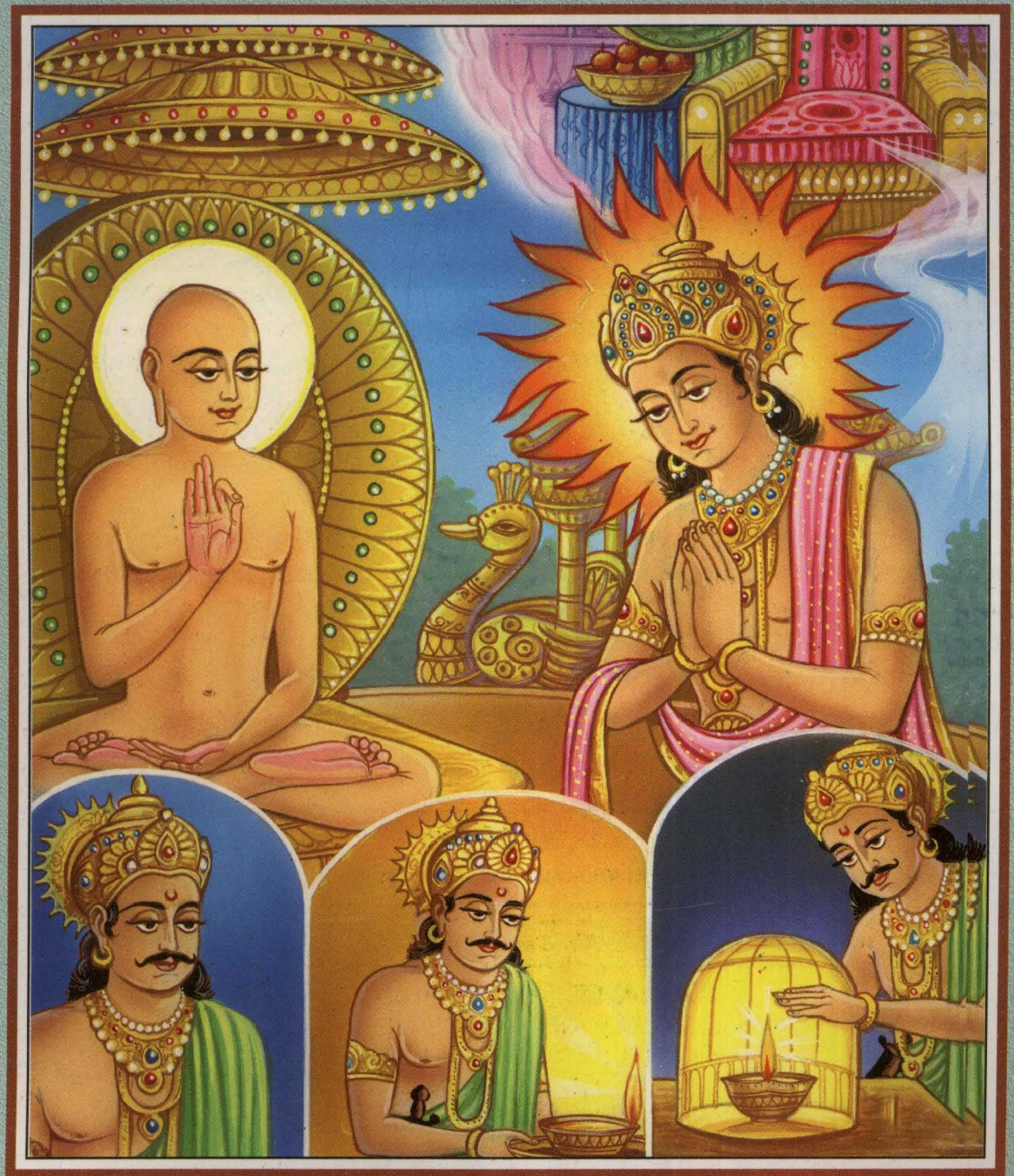




A Mahavir Seva Trust Presentation

# KING PRADESHI AND KESHIKUMAR SHRAMAN

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# KING PRADESHI AND KESHIKUMAR SHRAMAN

It is said that the touch of Philosopher's stone turns iron into gold, and effect of poison is undone by drinking ambrosia but till date no one has seen either Philosopher's stone or ambrosia. But the effect of pious company is much more astonishing than these two is an experienced truth. Good company changes life of man. His attitude is purified. A sinner turns into a sage. Evil persons turn into noble ones. A cruel and pitiless murderer becomes image of compassion. An enraged devil turns into a prophet of forgiveness.

In *Rayapaseniya Sutra*, a Jain Scripture, Bhagavan Mahavir has illustrated this by giving the example of *King Pradeshi* and *Keshikumar Shraman*. A non-believer and anti-religious person like *Pradeshi*, who was engrossed in sins including violence and passing death sentence even for minor crimes, turned into a great believer and highly religious person. He became a prophet of compassion and forgiveness; so much so that when he became aware that his queen had fed him poison-mixed food he remained calm and forgiving. He was neither sad nor angry at the queen. What brought about this change ? The answer is—influence of pious company.

In this picture story we have taken the story of *King Pradeshi*. Once *Suryaabh* god appeared before Bhagavan Mahavir and after paying homage displayed his divine opulence. At this *Gautam Swami* asked—"How this god acquired such grand divine opulence? What religious deeds he performed during his last birth?" In reply Bhagavan Mahavir narrated the story of his past birth and said that he was *King Pradeshi* then. And this was how his life changed.

—*Srichand Surana 'Saras'*

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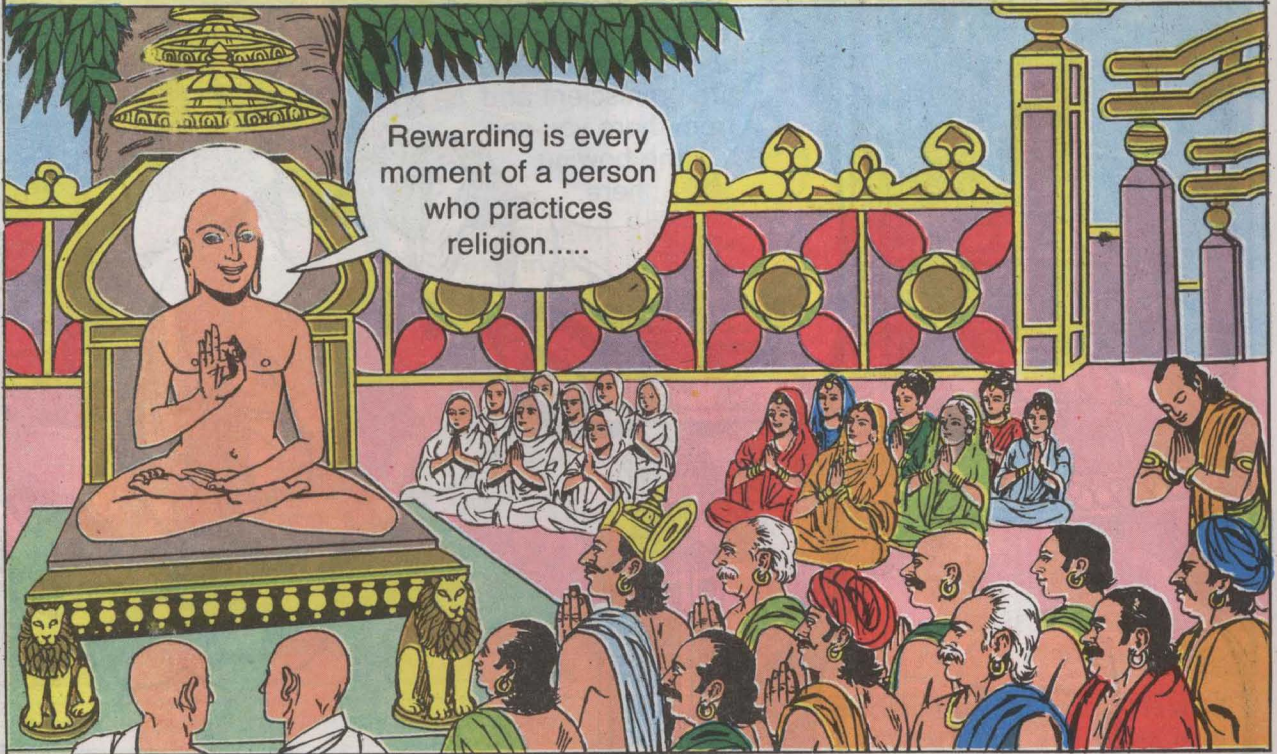
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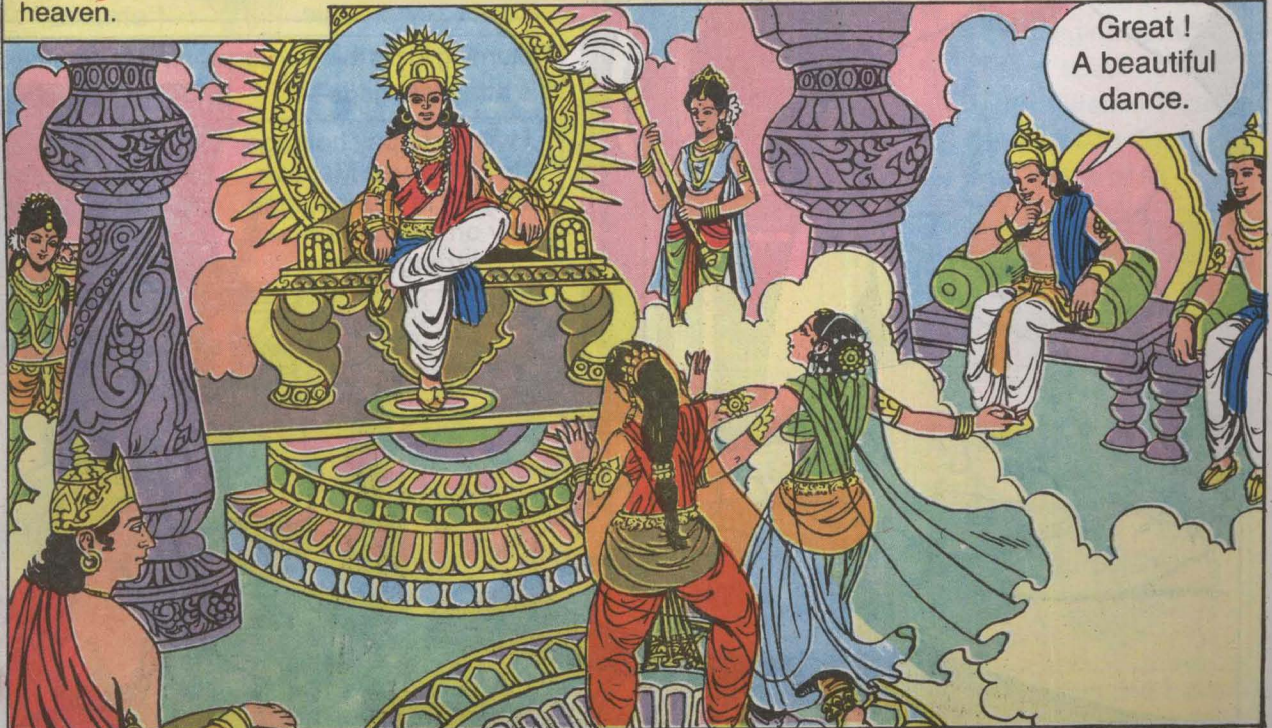


## KING PRADESHI AND KESHIKUMAR SHRAMAN

wanderings Bhagavan Mahavir arrived there. Bhagavan had his Samavasaran [divine assembly] in Amrashal garden outside the city where there were thousands of mango trees. The local Sangh, royal family and thousands of citizens listened to the sermon of Bhagavan.



At that time Suryaabh god was enjoying songs and dances of his divine damsels in the Saudharma heaven.





Suddenly he looked towards Bharat area. He saw Bhagavan Mahavir sitting in Amrashal garden. Suryaabh god was filled with devotion. He at once stepped down from his throne and paid homage to Bhagavan—



Returning to his throne, Suryaabh god instructed his attendant gods—

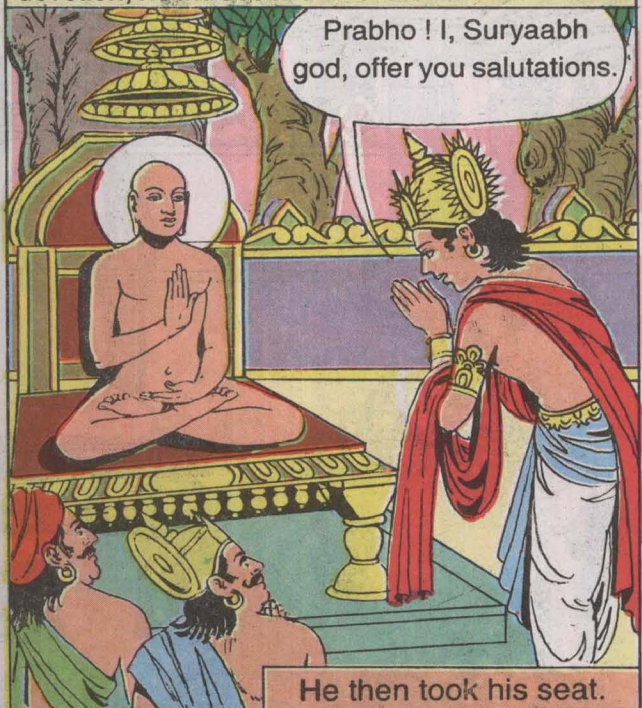
I will go to pay homage to Bhagavan Mahavir staying in Aamalkappa city on the earth. Make arrangements.



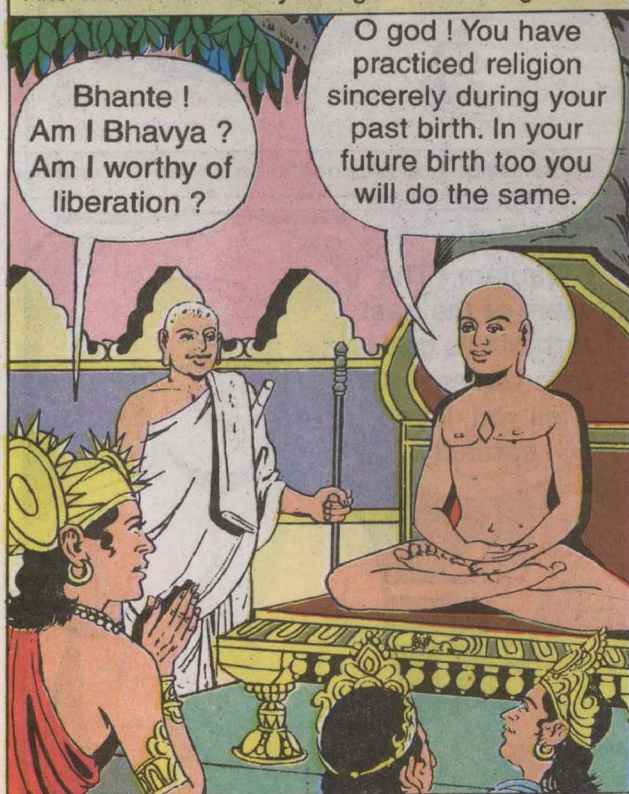
The gods at once prepared the Vimaan—



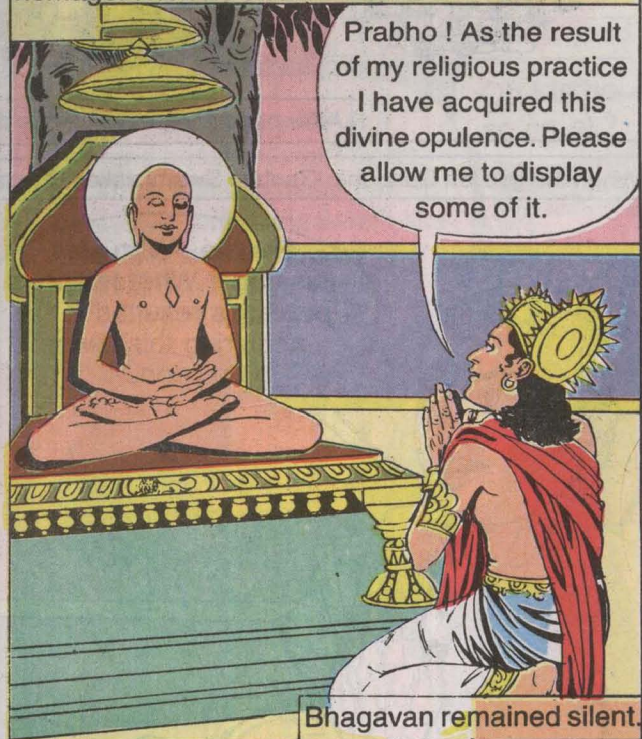
Boarding the Vimaan with his divine family, Suryaabh god came to the religious assembly of Bhagavan Mahavir. Paying homage with complete devotion, he introduced himself—



After the discourse Suryaabh god asked Bhagavan—



Suryaabh god was delighted to hear this. He went around Bhagavan three times and again paid homage. Then he said—



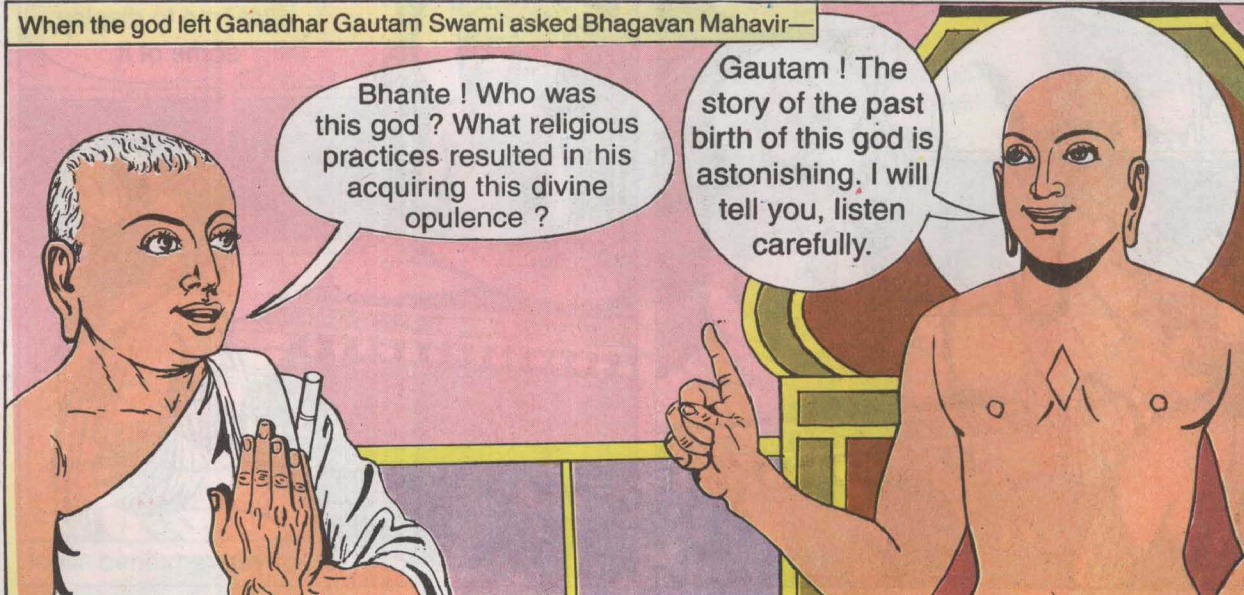


### King Pradeshi and Keshikumar Shraman

Suryaabh god gave a signal to accompanying gods. First of all they paid homage to Bhagavan and then presented attractive performances in the formation of eight auspicious symbols.



When the god left Ganadhar Gautam Swami asked Bhagavan Mahavir—







It is a tale from the remote past. Pradeshi was the king of Shvetambika city. He was anti-religious and indulged in cruel acts like violence. Suryakanta was his queen. Their son was Suryakant. His prime minister Chitt was very pious, kind, intelligent and just. He was a childhood friend of the king.

He has not paid taxes. Beat him more.

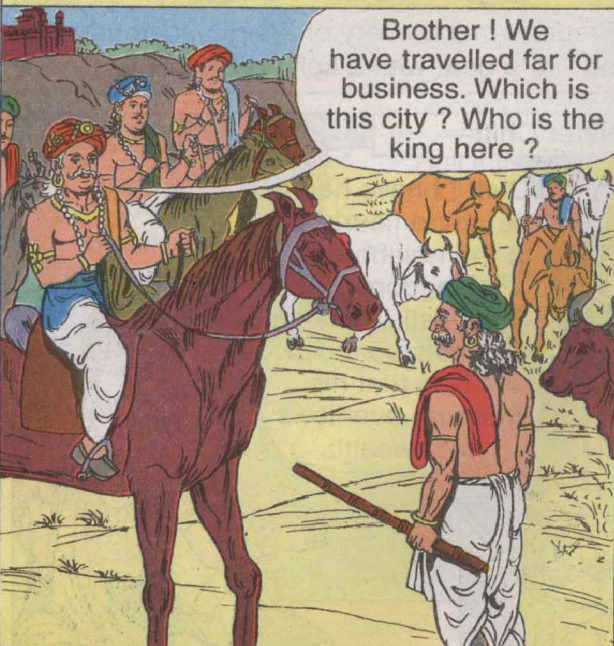


Sire ! Kindly pardon him. We will collect all taxes next year.

Once a caravan of traders passed around Shvetambika city. When it came near the city an old trader asked a cowherd—

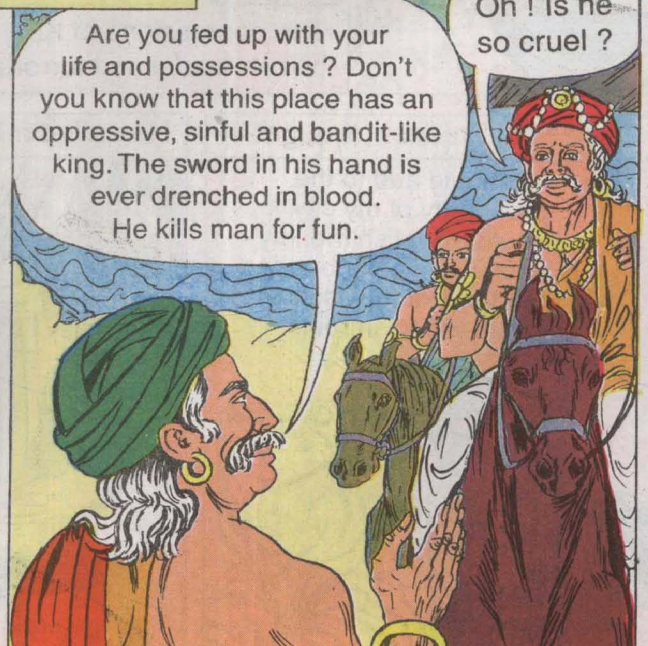
The cowherd laughed and said

Brother ! We have travelled far for business. Which is this city ? Who is the king here ?

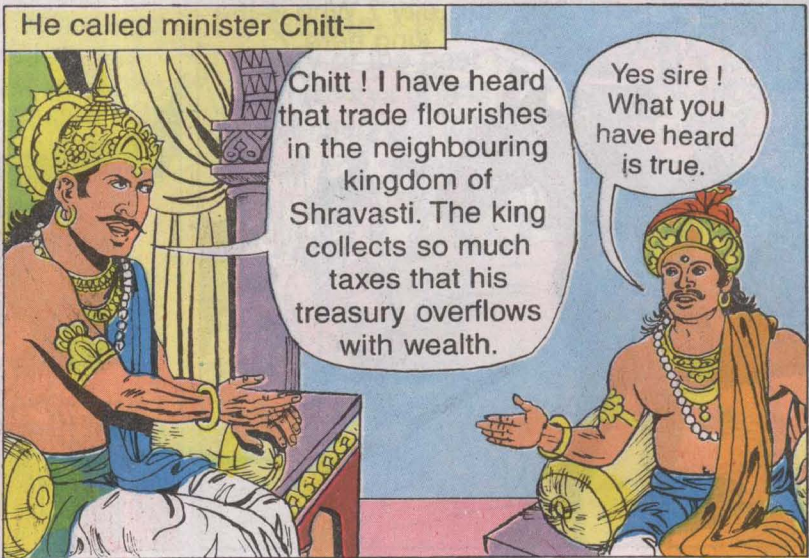
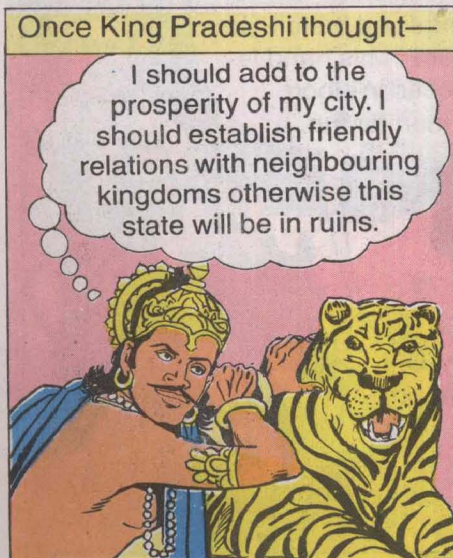
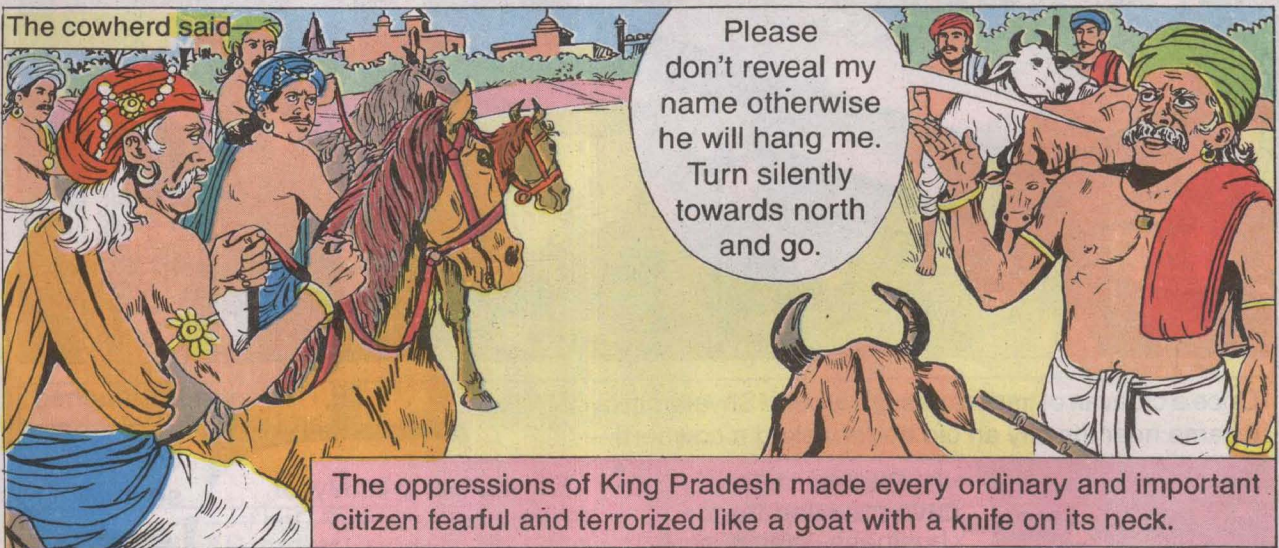
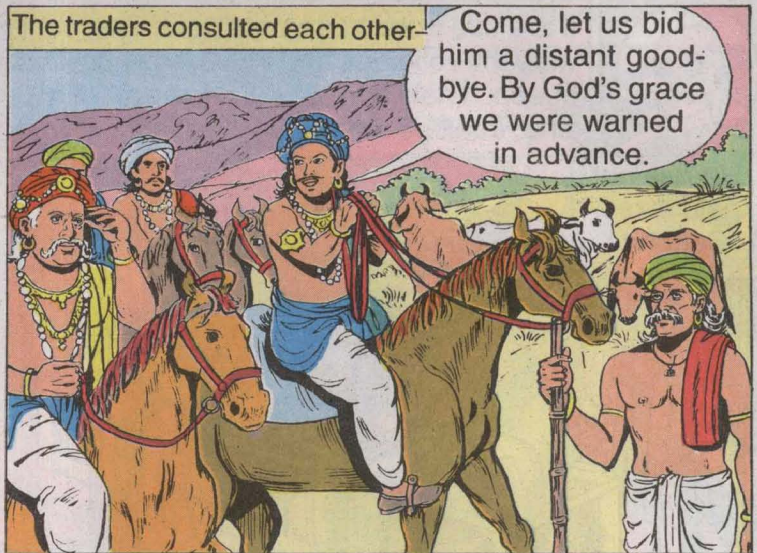


Are you fed up with your life and possessions ? Don't you know that this place has an oppressive, sinful and bandit-like king. The sword in his hand is ever drenched in blood. He kills man for fun.

Oh ! Is he so cruel ?











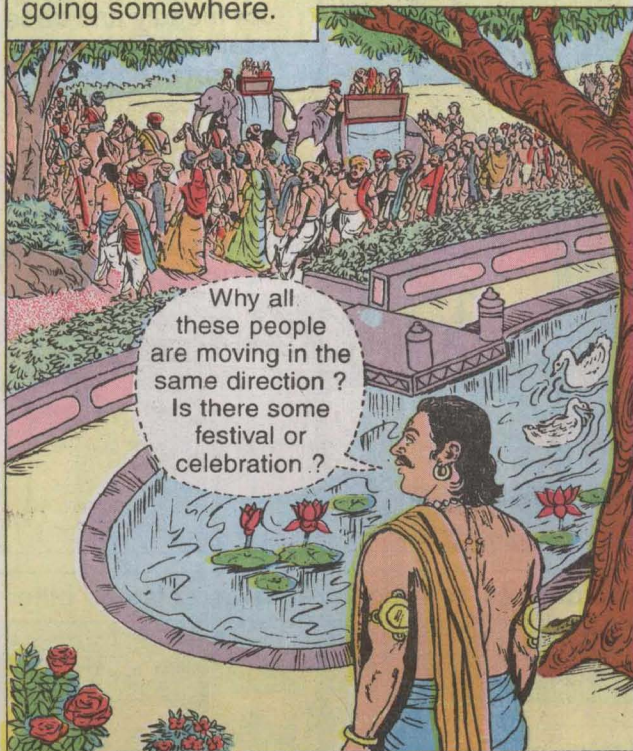
Next day minister Chitt filled chariots with beautiful dresses, ornaments, fruits, sweets and other costly gifts for the king of Shravasti and left.



The minister was offered stay in the state guest house in the middle of the garden.



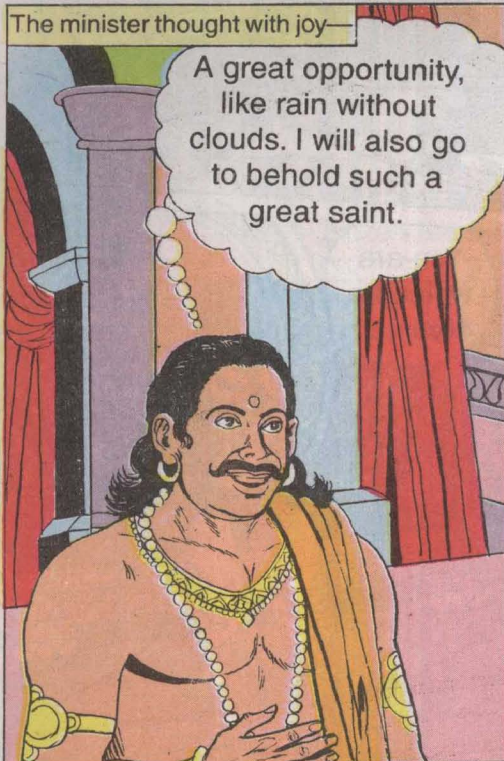
Next morning the minister saw that hundreds of well dressed citizens were going somewhere.



The minister asked the guard, who informed—

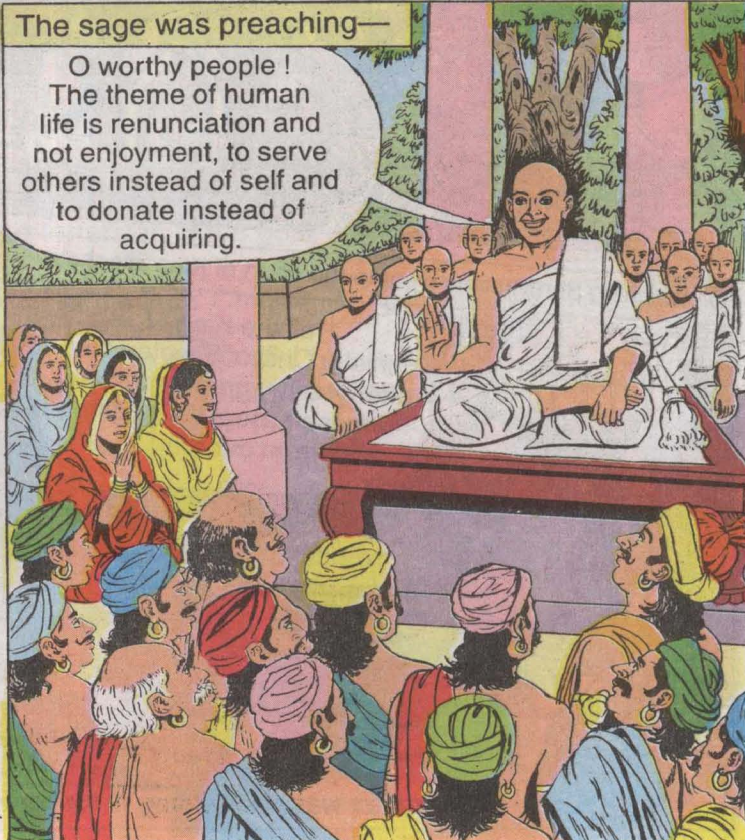


The minister thought with joy—



Getting ready after taking a bath, the minister left for the garden to attend the discourse.

The sage was preaching—





## King Pradeshi and Keshikumar Shraman

After the discourse Minister Chitt went to the sage and said—

Gurudev ! I felt blessed hearing your sermon. I too wish to accept Shravak Dharma.

Noble one ! Do what benefits your soul without any delay.

The minister accepted Shravak Dharma and attended Keshikumar Shraman's discourse everyday.

Minister Chitt stayed in Shravasti for many days. He made many treaties with the king. One day he said to the king—

Sire ! I want to return to my kingdom tomorrow.

All right minister. Please give my message of friendship to your king.

The king gave many beautiful gifts to the minister.

After taking his leave, the minister rode a chariot and came to Keshikumar Shraman.

Gurudev ! After concluding my mission I am returning to my state. Shvetambika is a beautiful city, Gurudev ! Please do us the honour of your visit sometimes. We will be obliged.

The sage looked at the minister and smiled. The minister added—

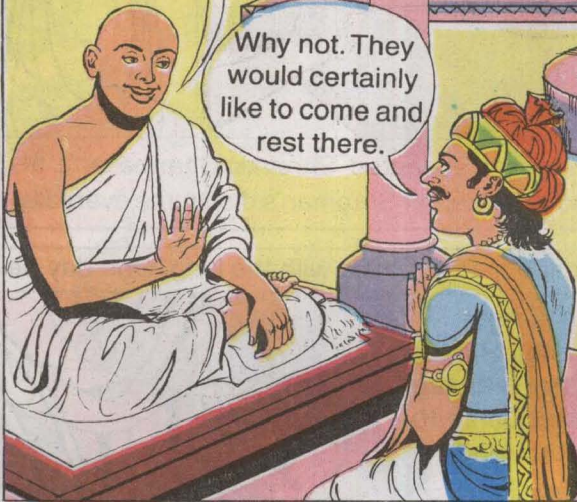
O great sage ! Would you kindly accept my request ?



Then Keshikumar Shraman said—

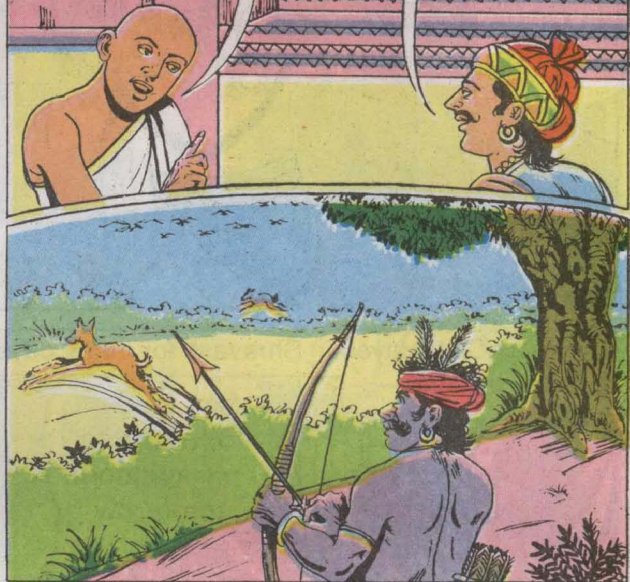
Minister ! Tell me one thing. There is a beautiful garden with numerous dense trees loaded with flowers and fruits. Animals and birds would like to come there or not ?

Why not. They would certainly like to come and rest there.



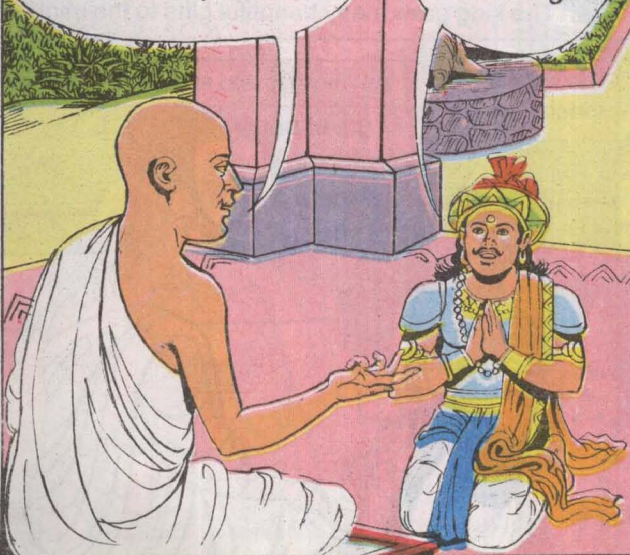
Imagine that there is a hunter with a bow and arrow hiding there. Now, would animals and birds like to come there ?

No ! Who will come to a place where messenger of death is dancing ?



You see, minister ! Your Shvetambika city is like that garden. But your cruel and irreligious king sits there like a hunter. How can sages and saints visit that place ?

Gurudev ! Kindly pay a visit once. I feel that in noble company the wicked king will change.

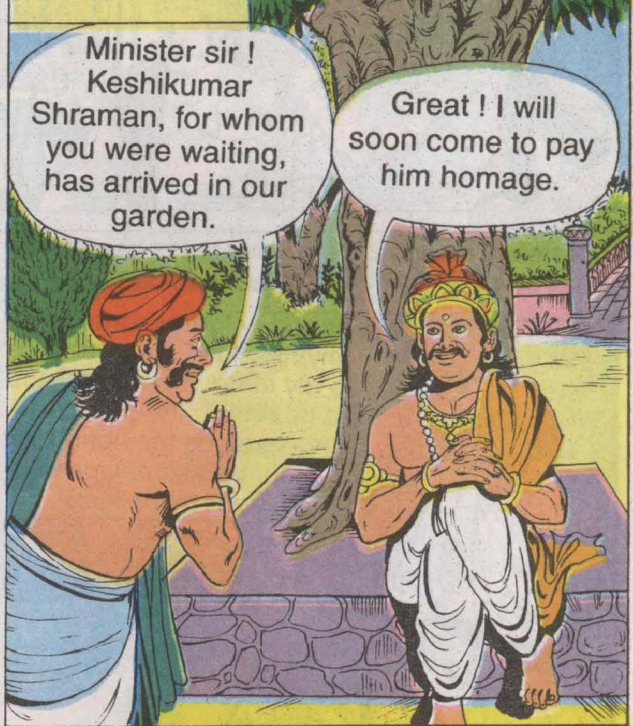


After great persuasion the minister made the sage accept his request.

Some days later while minister Chitt was sitting in his garden the guards informed him—

Minister sir ! Keshikumar Shraman, for whom you were waiting, has arrived in our garden.

Great ! I will soon come to pay him homage.



The minister dismissed the guard after rewarding him.



Minister Chitt made a plan to take King Pradeshi to see Keshikumar Shraman. Next morning he arrived at the palace in a chariot with four horses. He went to the king and said—



Sire ! The four horse we got from Kamboj have been trained. Now they are ready for a trial.

Good ! Let's go for a ride and take the trial.

The king got ready and boarded the chariot. Minister Chitt became the charioteer and drove the chariot.

The minister covered a long distance with great speed. The king said—

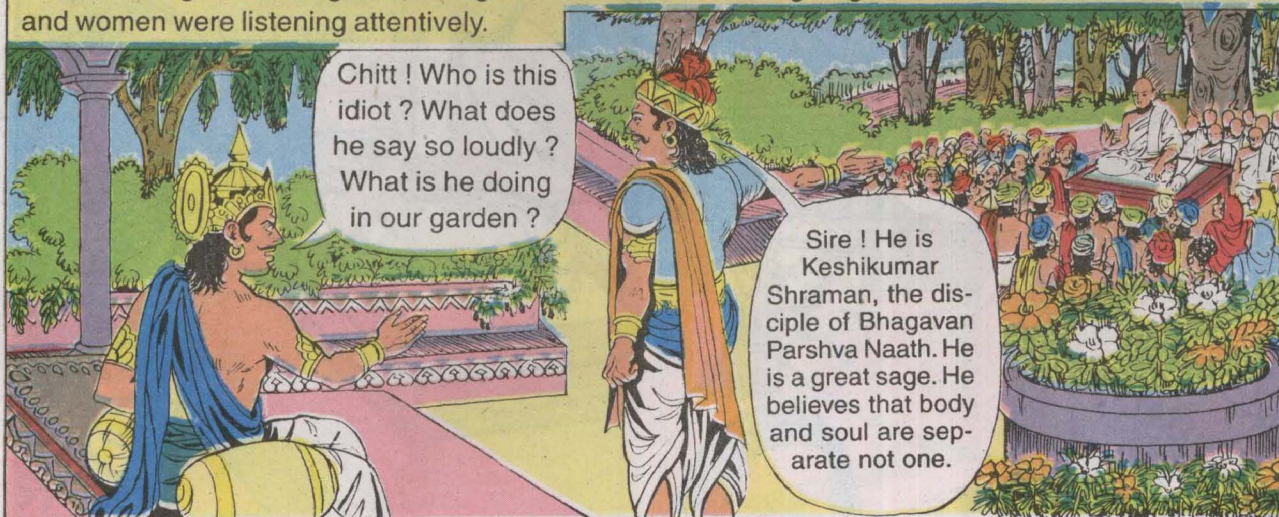
Chitt ! In this scorching sun I am drenched with sweat. I am hungry and thirsty as well. We should rest now. Please look for some garden.

Sire ! Our Mrigavan garden is just ahead. We may go there and rest.



The minister came to the garden with the king.

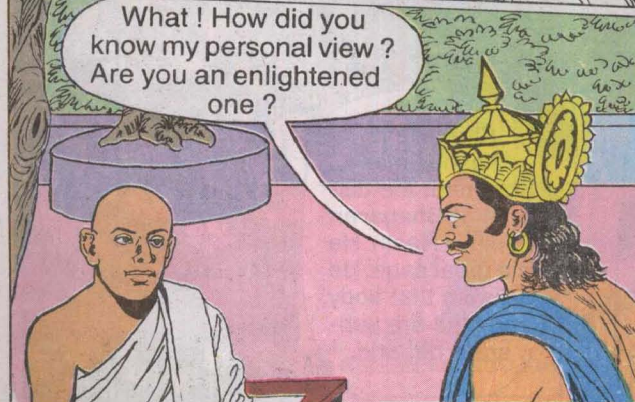
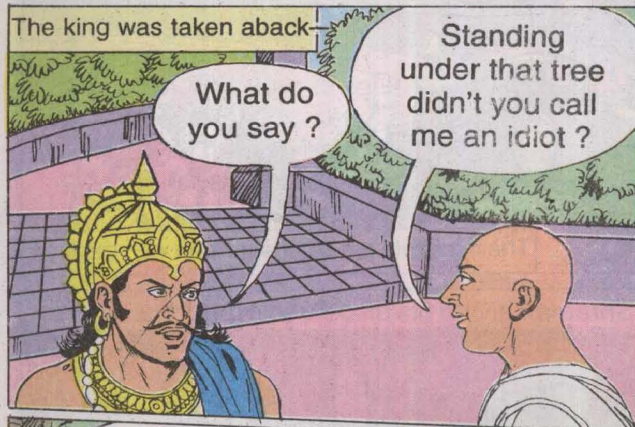
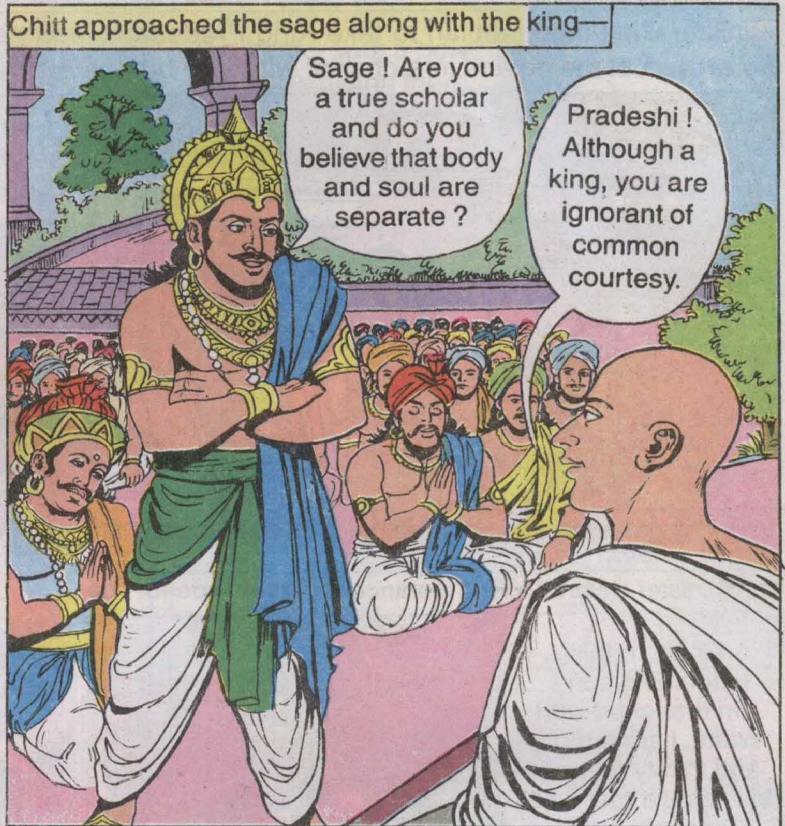
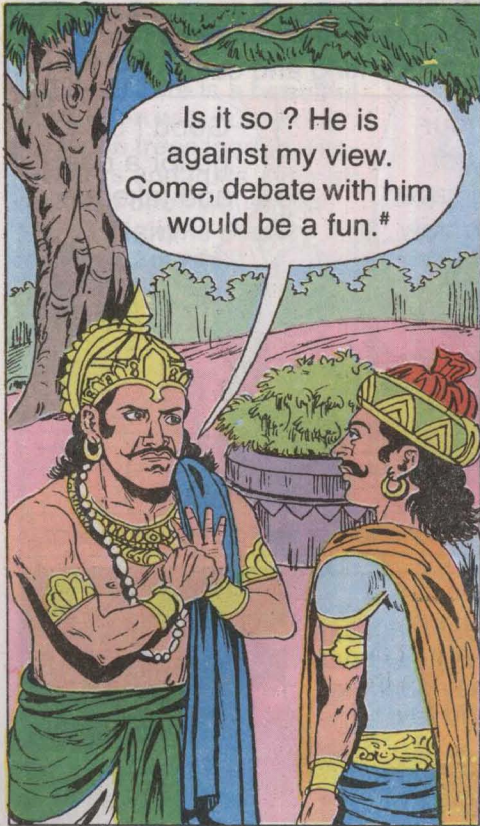
While the king was resting he saw sage Keshikumar Shraman giving his discourse. Hundreds of men and women were listening attentively.



Chitt ! Who is this idiot ? What does he say so loudly ? What is he doing in our garden ?

Sire ! He is Keshikumar Shraman, the disciple of Bhagavan Parshva Naath. He is a great sage. He believes that body and soul are separate not one.





# King Pradeshi believed that soul does not have an independent existence.

Jain Education International

# Extrasensory perception and knowledge of thought process and thought-forms of other beings.



The king sat down and asked—

O sage ! Do you believe that body and soul are separate ?

O king ! It is not just that I believe, it is, indeed, a fact. Soul is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. Soul is immortal.

If soul is immortal do you mean that my grand father who, like me, loved violence must have gone to hell after his death.

Yes ! Those who commit violence go only to hell.

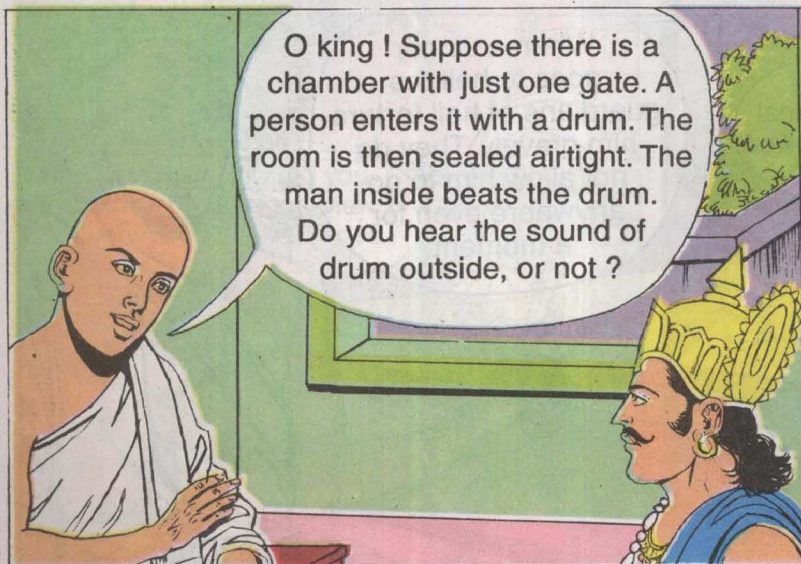
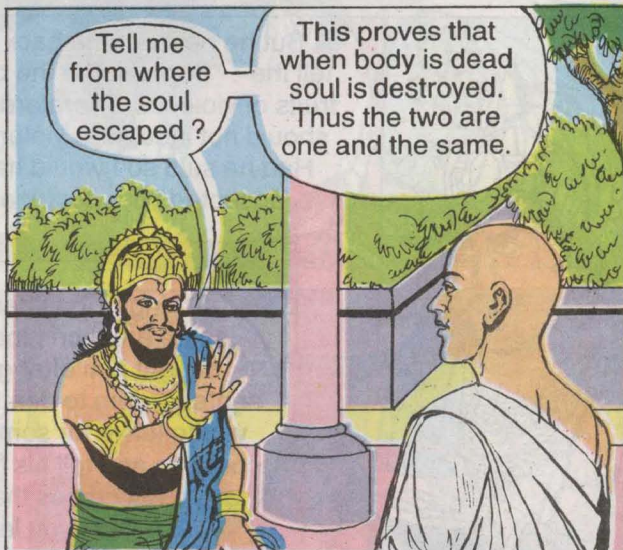
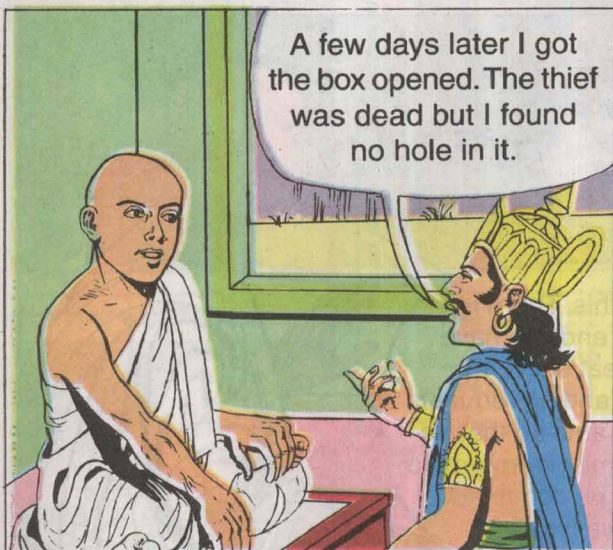
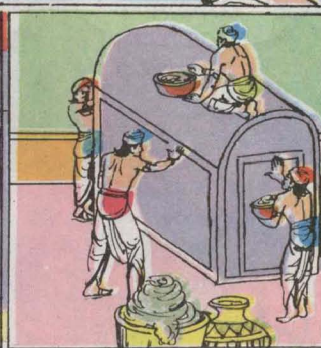
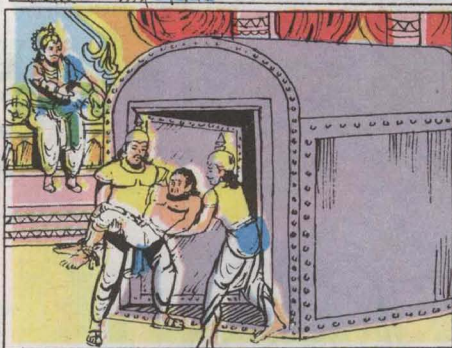
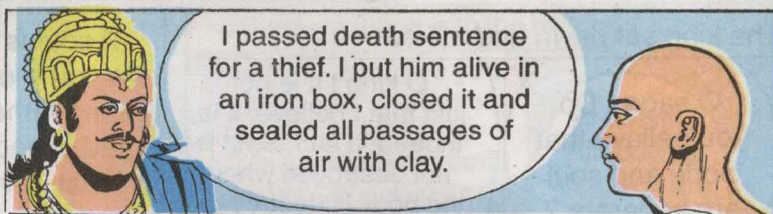
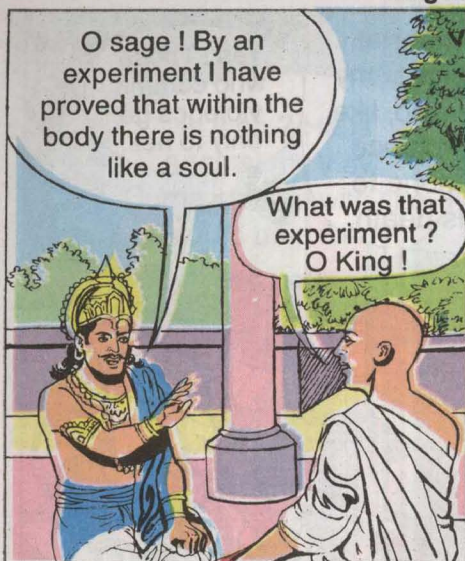
But he never came back to tell me—“Son, I suffer the bitter fruits of violence. Therefore, you should not indulge in violence.” Had he said so I would have accepted your doctrine.

O king ! Consider this. There is some great criminal and you have caught him after great effort. You sentence him to death and he requests you to leave for some time so that he could go and tell his family members to avoid the crimes that he committed. Would you leave him ?

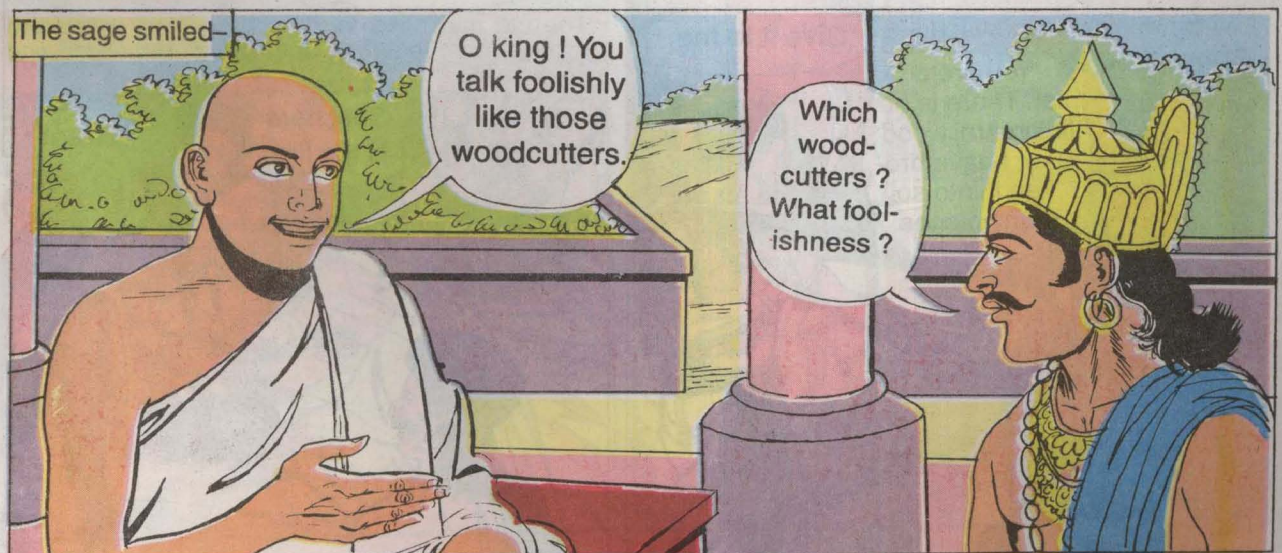
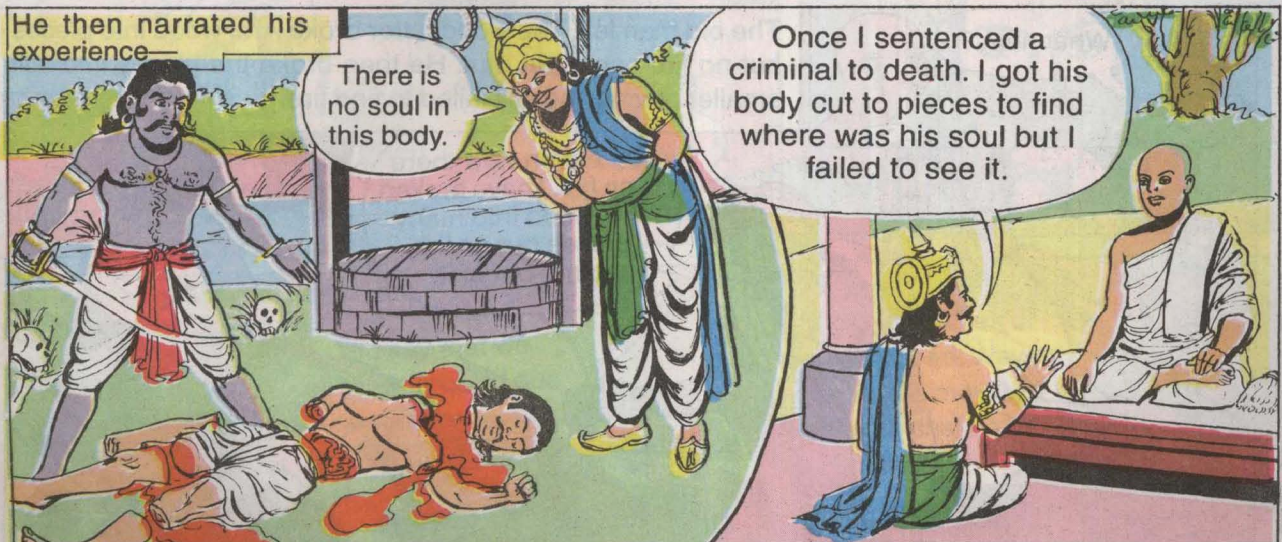
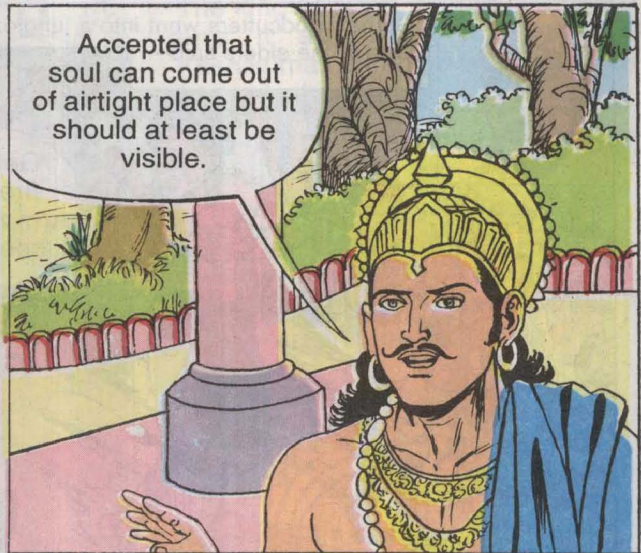
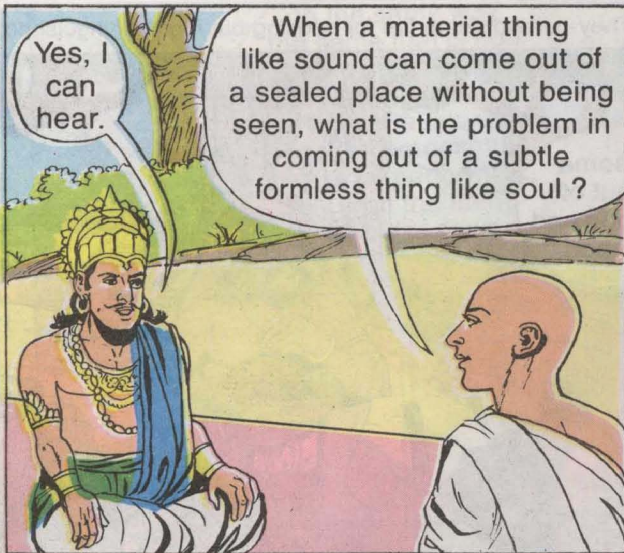
Not at all. Such a criminal cannot be allowed to go.

When a sinner goes to hell the guardians of hell torture him gravely. They do not allow him to go anywhere even for a moment.











Some woodcutters went into a jungle. They carried some fire for cooking but it got extinguished. One of the elders said—

Get some fire out of Arni wood and cook food.

What next ?

The old man left. The woodcutter broke Arni wood into pieces but no fire came out of it. He then broke the pieces into still smaller pieces and still failed to find fire.

Oh ! Even now there is no fire. I have broken this wood into many pieces but no fire came out of it.

By then the old man returned—

Give it to me.

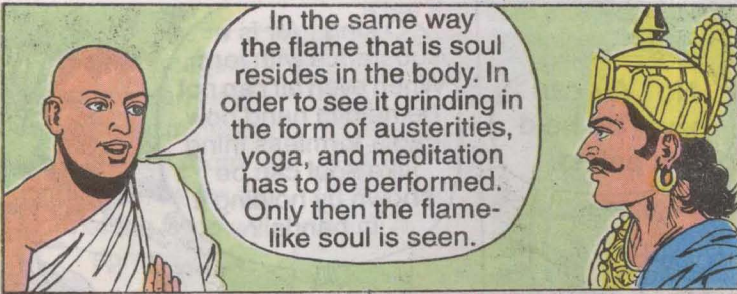
You are a liar. There is no fire in Arni wood. See, I have broken it into so many pieces.

The old man took two pieces of Arni wood and rubbed them together. Sparks were produced and fire was lit.

See, here is the fire.

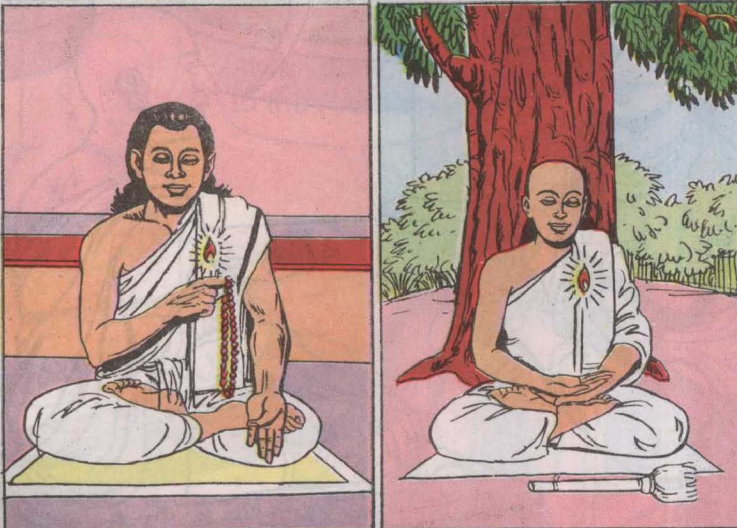
Great !



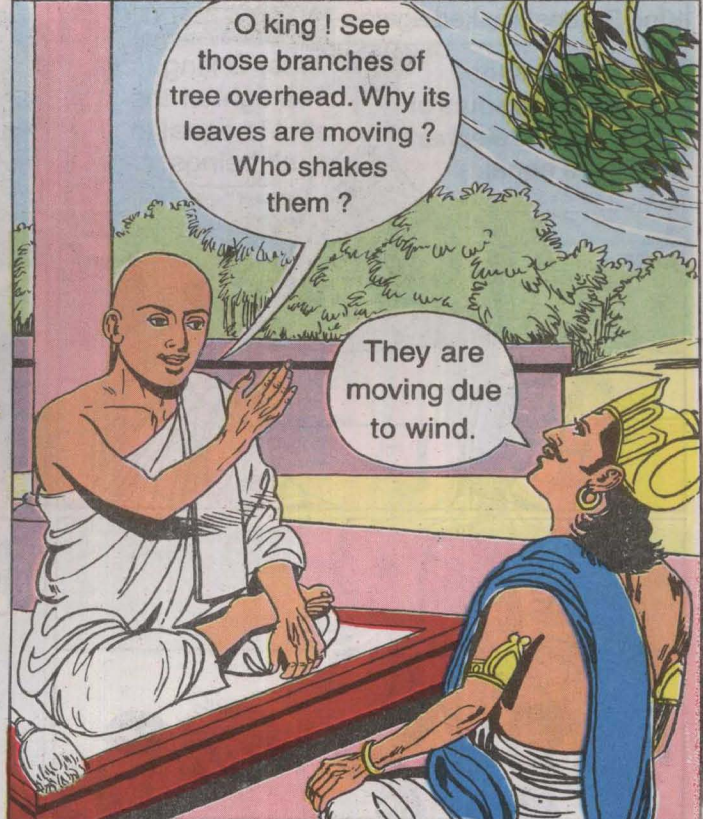
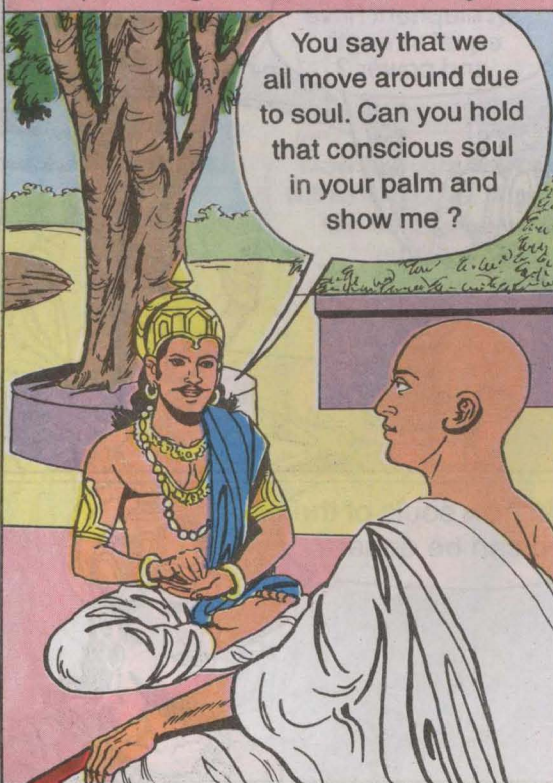


The king debated for long and in the end it appeared to him that Keshikumar Shraman was telling the truth. He thought—

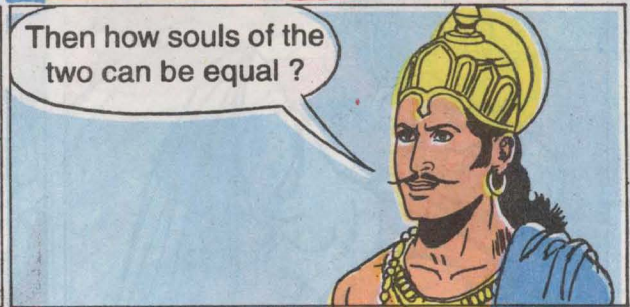
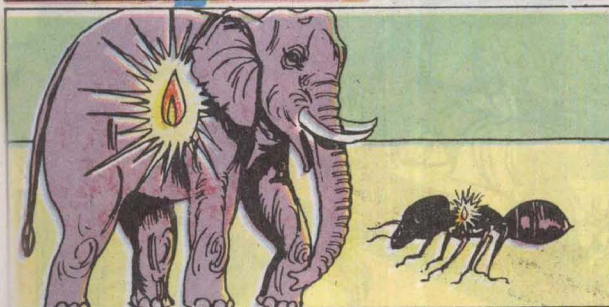
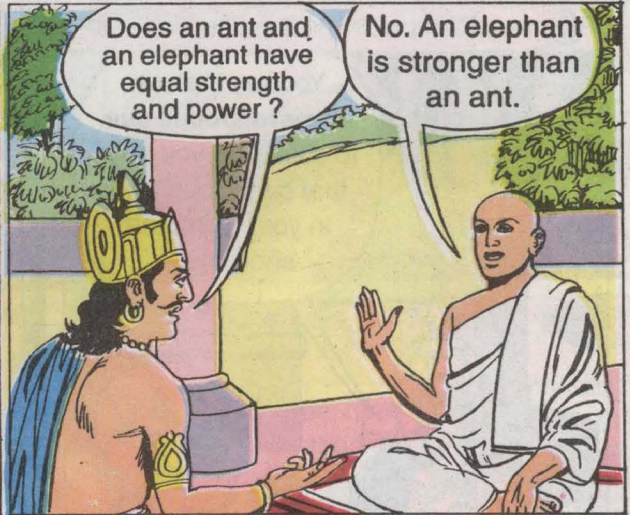
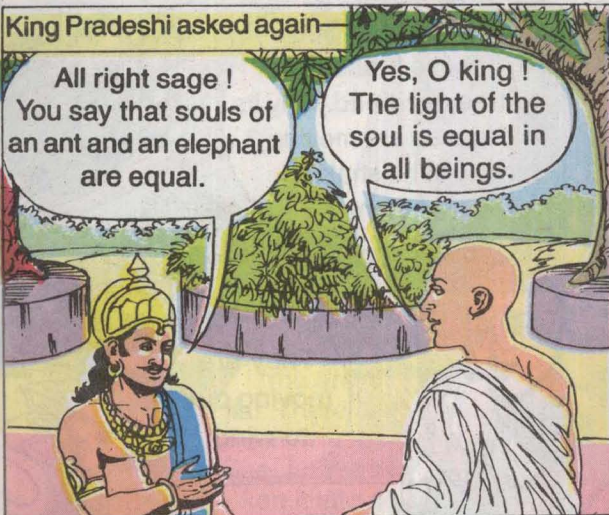
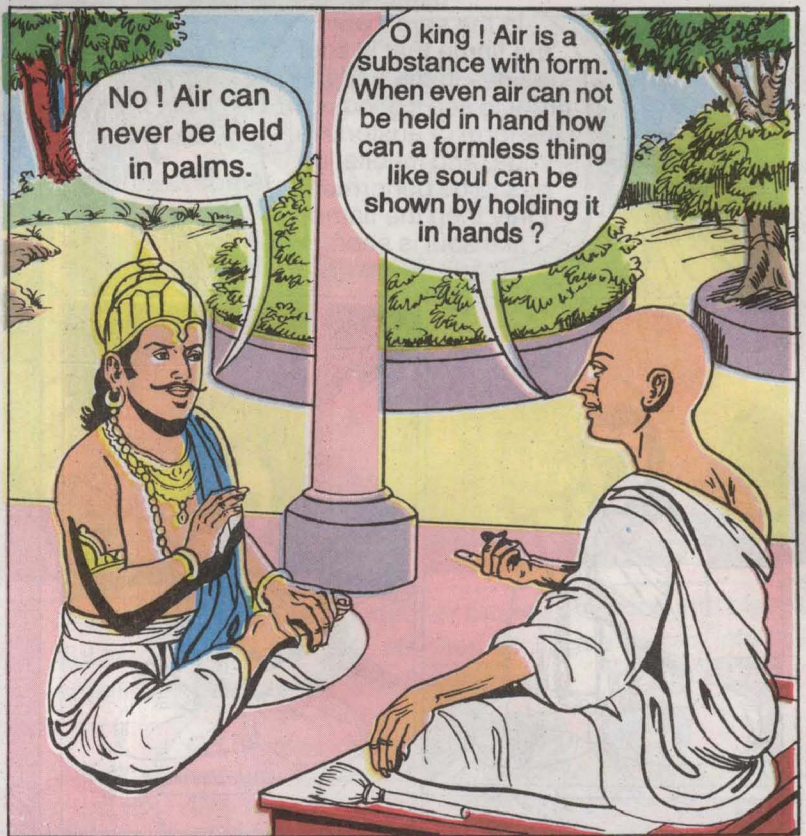
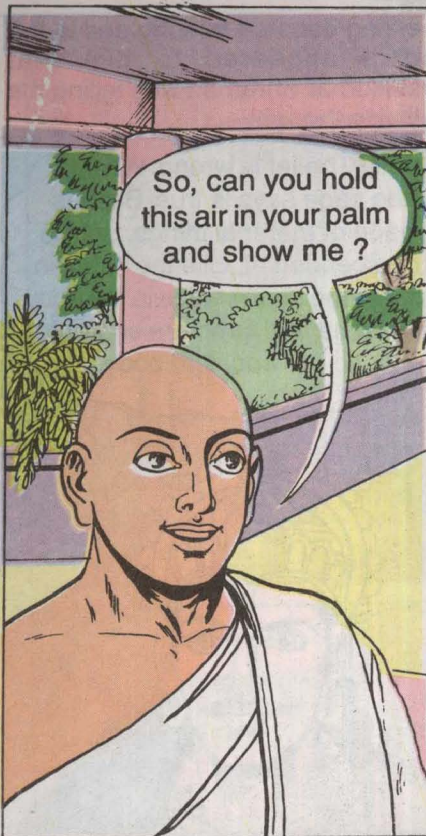
My belief is wrong. What the sage says is true. Body is made of material things. Soul is transcendental. Like the flame in a lamp, the soul resides in the body. As flame and lamp are separate so are soul and body.



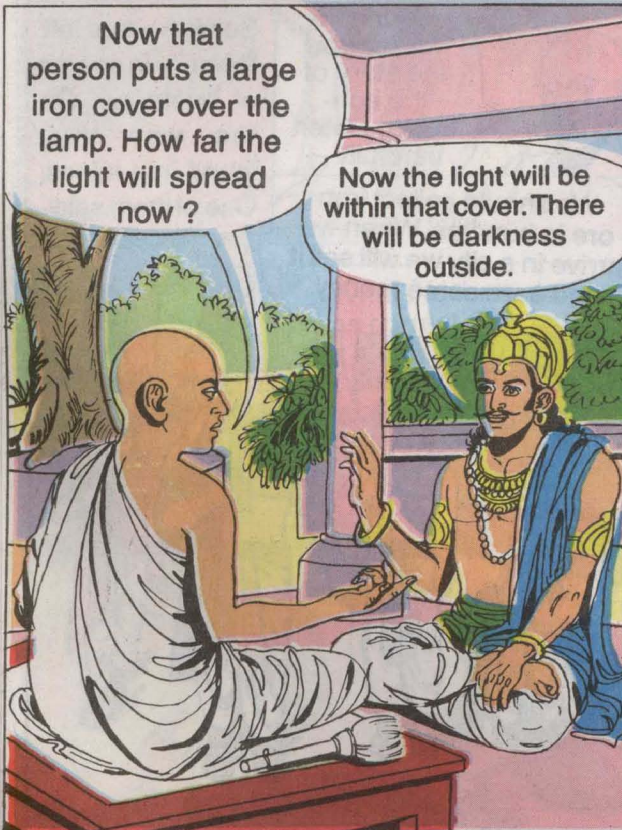
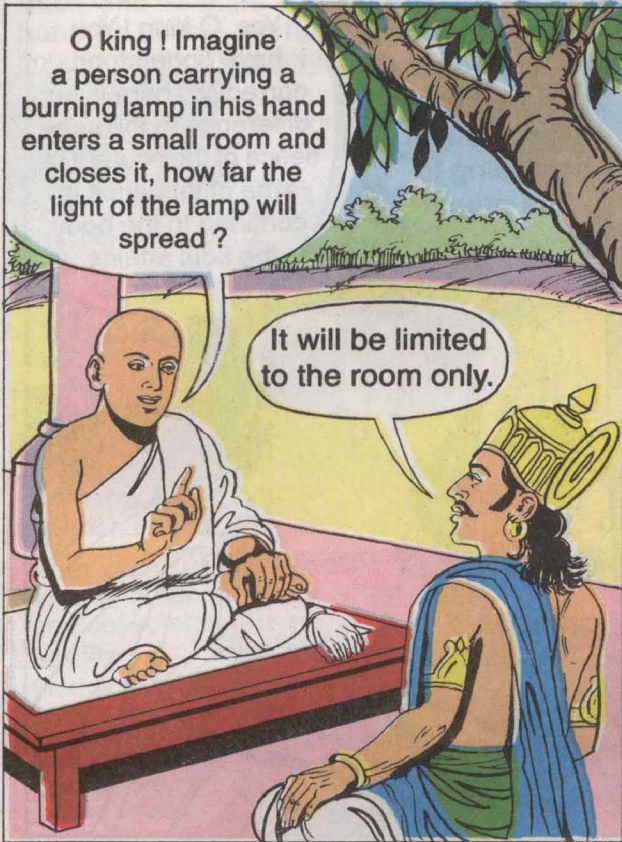
After pondering for some time the king said—



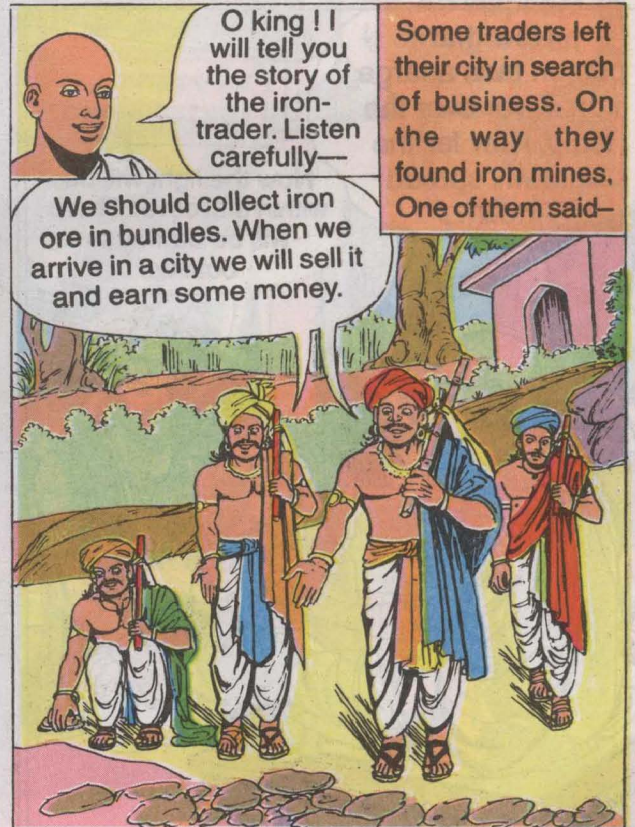
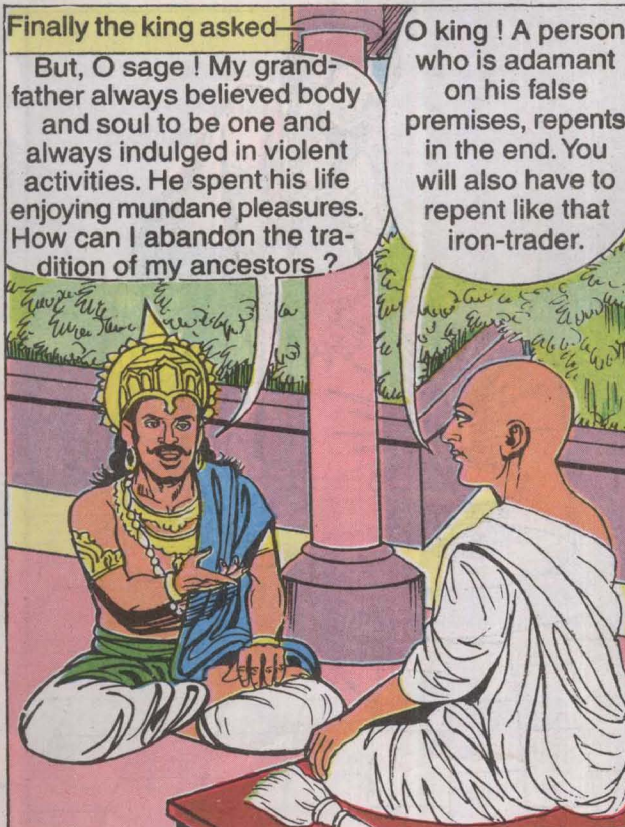
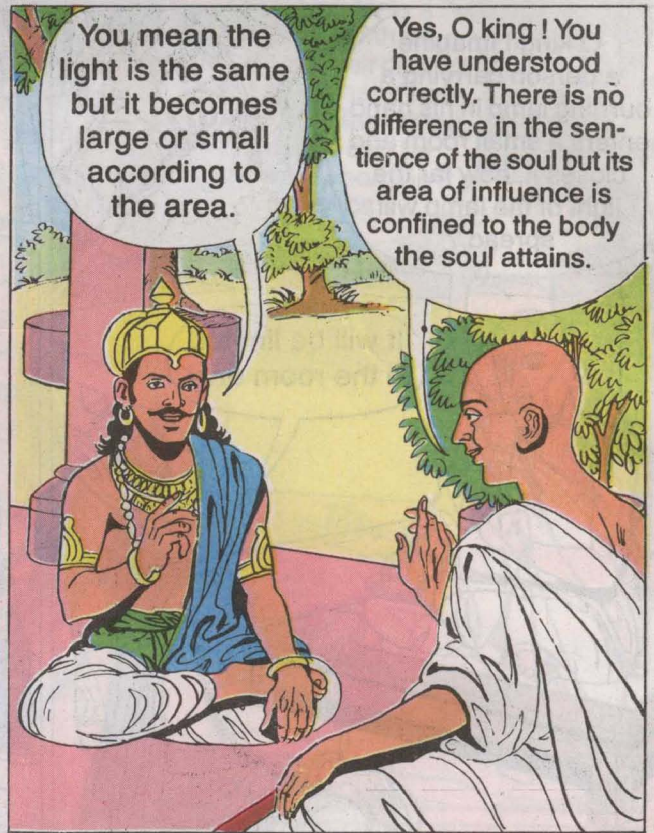
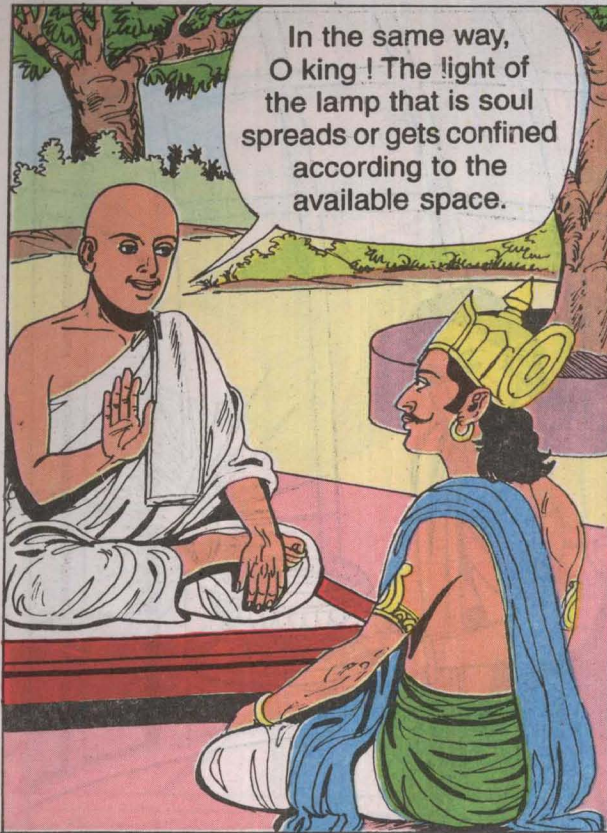










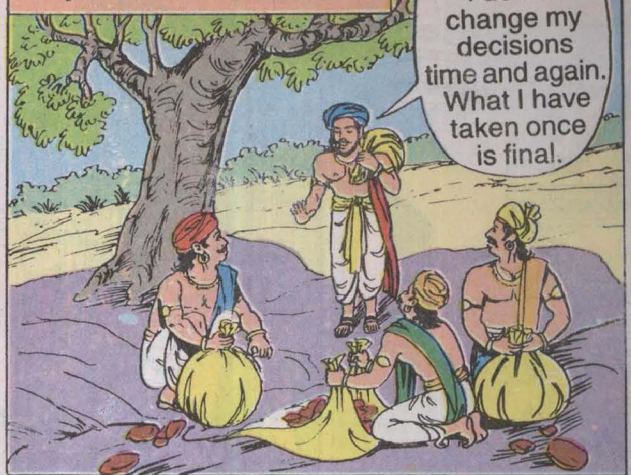




Each one of them collected the iron-ore in bundles. Some distance away they found copper mines. They consulted each other—



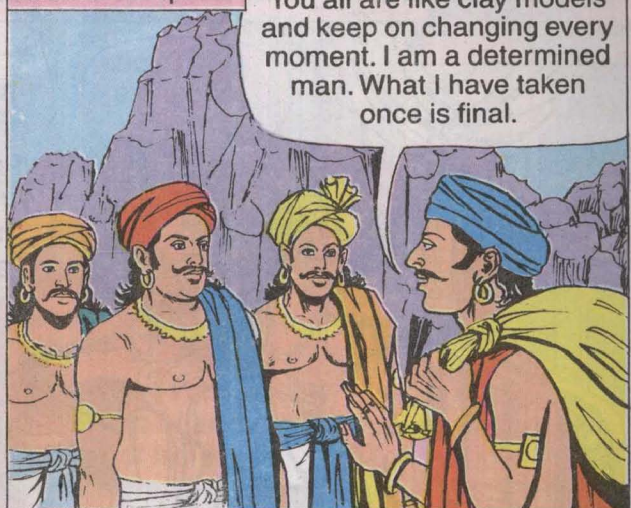
Everyone collected copper except one who was very adamant. He said—



After going some distance they found silver and gold mines. Three of them threw copper and collected silver and gold. They said to the fourth—

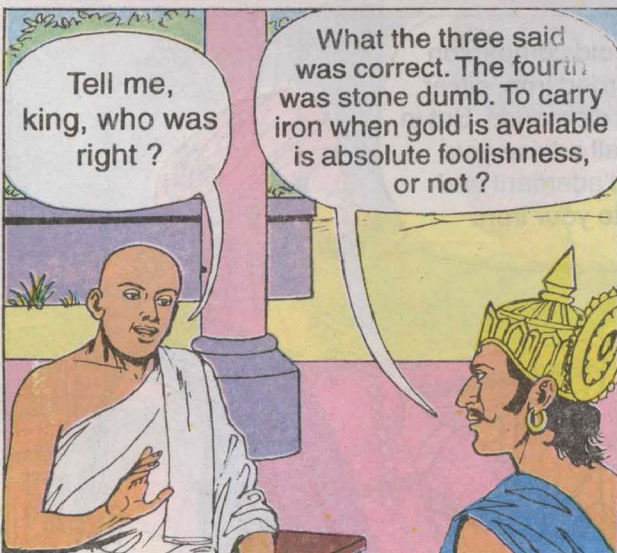


The fourth replied—



Tell me, king, who was right ?

What the three said was correct. The fourth was stone dumb. To carry iron when gold is available is absolute foolishness, or not ?

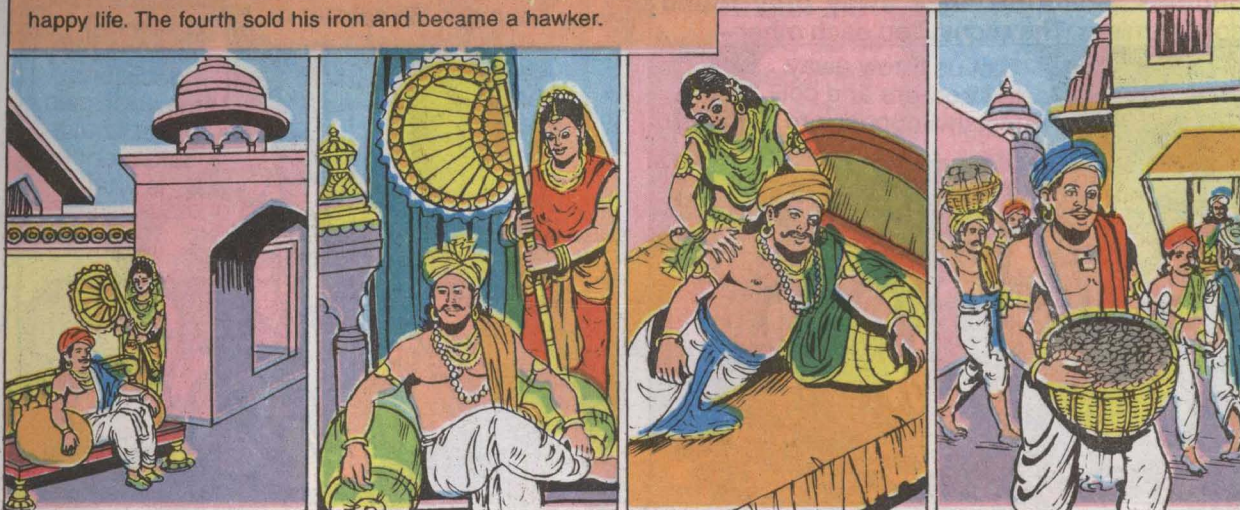


Going further they came across a diamond mine. The three threw away the gold and collected diamonds. But the fourth was still adamant on his idea that what was taken once was final. He retained his iron.

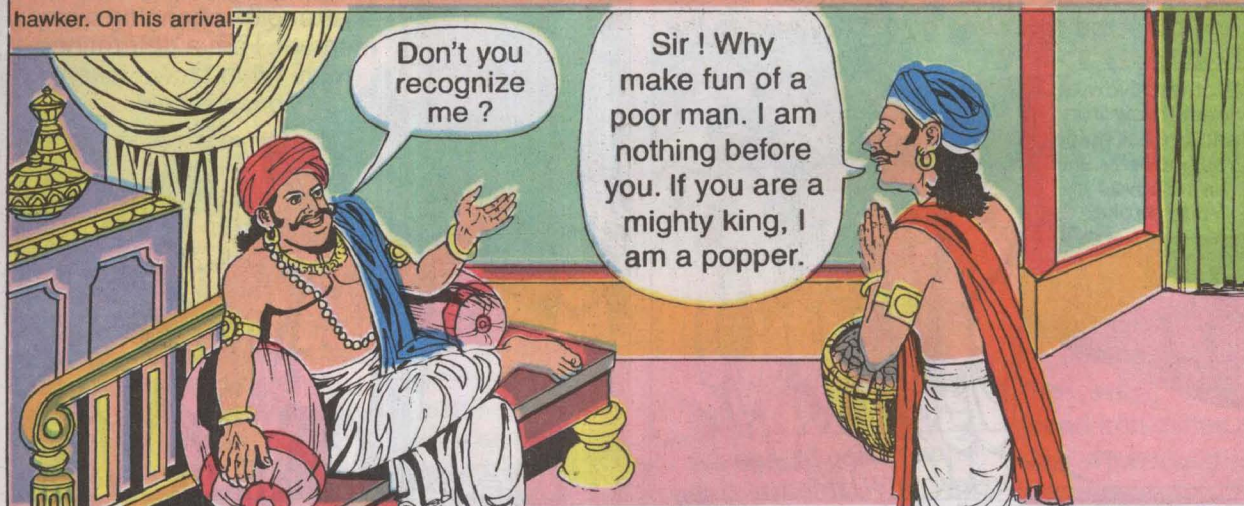




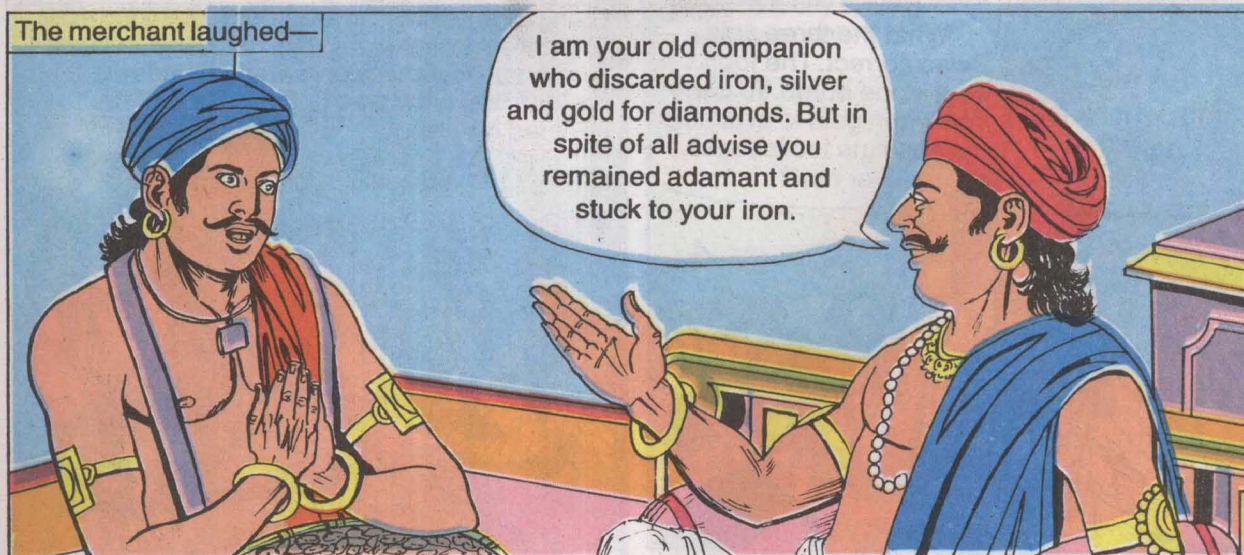
When they reached a city the three traders sold their diamonds and became rich and influential. They started leading a happy life. The fourth sold his iron and became a hawker.



One day while the hawker was moving around one of his old companion recognized him. He sent his servant to call the hawker. On his arrival—



The merchant laughed—





The hawker stared wide-eyed at the merchant's grandeur and cursed himself—

Alas ! I have ruined myself.

But there was no use crying over spilt milk.....

Explaining the theme of the story, the sage said—

Pradeshi ! If you remain trapped in shackles of the ways of your grandfather, you too may have to repent like that.

Gurudev ! I have understood the lesson. It is foolish to have false dogmas even after knowing the truth. I am not such a fool.

After that the king joined his palms and said—

I accept your philosophy. Now I believe that soul and body are separate. Soul has to suffer the consequences of sin and piety. Please teach me your religion.

Keshikumar Shraman gave King Pradeshi lessons on fundamentals including Ahimsa, kindness, truth, celibacy, detachment and austerities and added—

O king ! A being has to bear the fruits of his deeds. Therefore always do good deeds. Noble actions bring noble fruits.

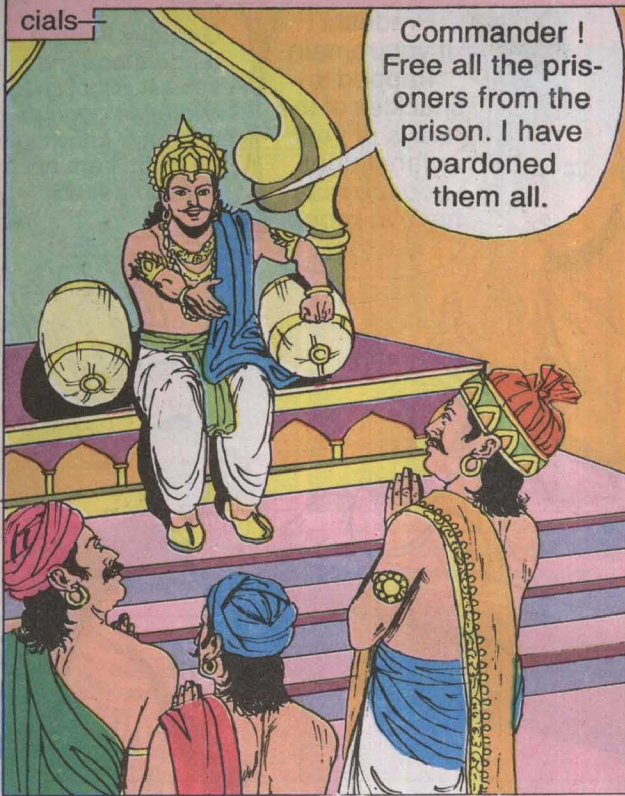
Gurudev ! Since this day I accept the path of austerities and discipline shown by you. I abandon violence and resolve to be kind, compassionate and loving to all.

The king returned to his palace after paying homage to Keshikumar Shraman.



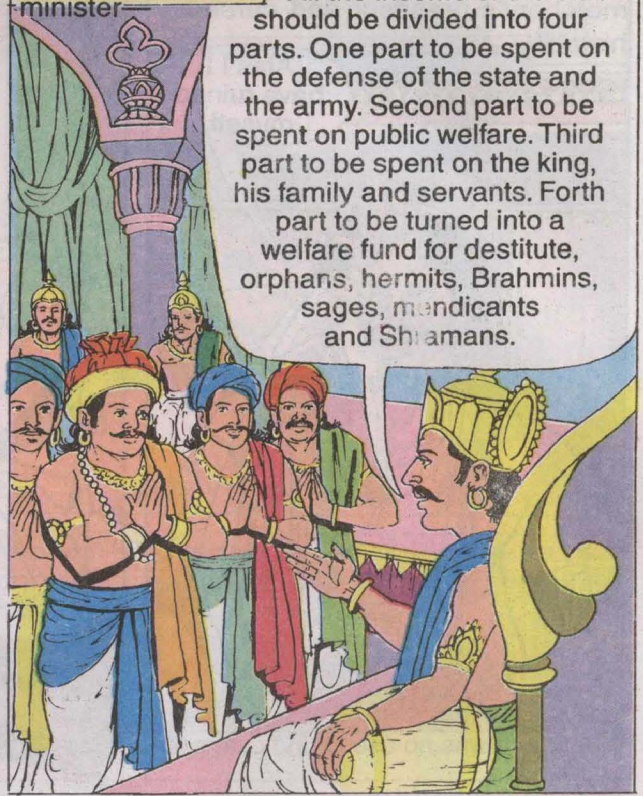
Next day he called his minister and other officials—

Commander !  
Free all the prisoners from the prison. I have pardoned them all.



Then he said to the minister—

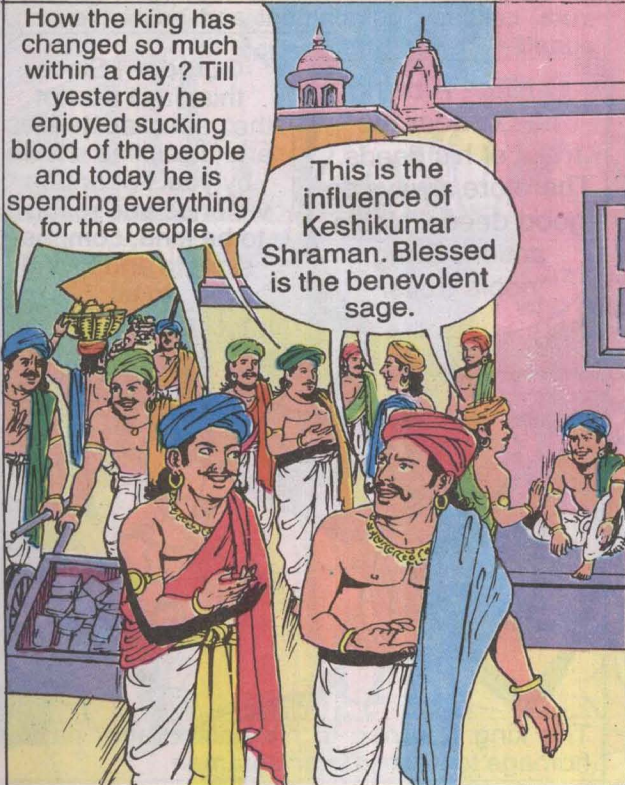
All the income of the state should be divided into four parts. One part to be spent on the defense of the state and the army. Second part to be spent on public welfare. Third part to be spent on the king, his family and servants. Fourth part to be turned into a welfare fund for destitute, orphans, hermits, Brahmins, sages, mendicants and Shramans.



On getting news about this, people started talking—

How the king has changed so much within a day ? Till yesterday he enjoyed sucking blood of the people and today he is spending everything for the people.

This is the influence of Keshikumar Shraman. Blessed is the benevolent sage.



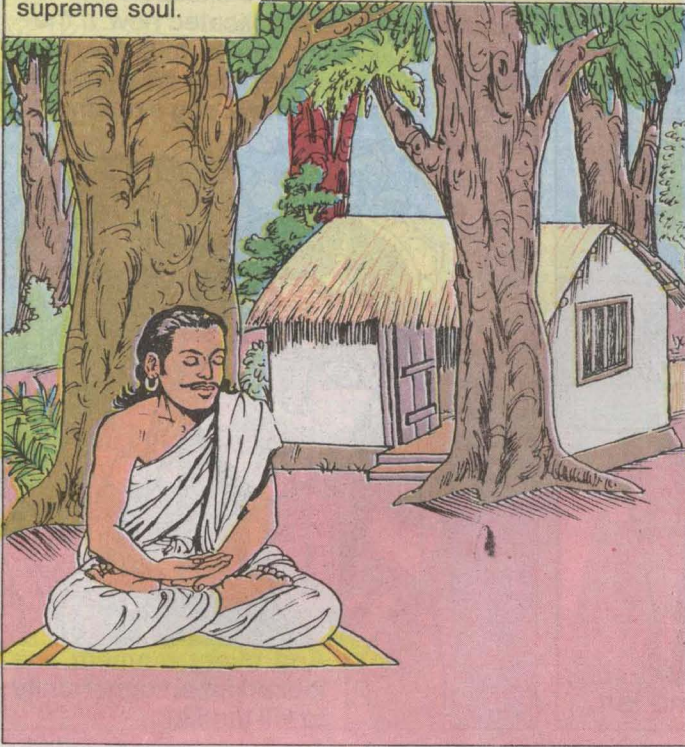
The king told Minister Chitt—

Chitt ! Now all the responsibility of the state is on you. I will atone for the sins I committed and purify my soul.





And the king started living in isolation in his meditation hut. He spent his time in austerities including fasting, and remaining engrossed in meditation and devotion for the supreme soul.



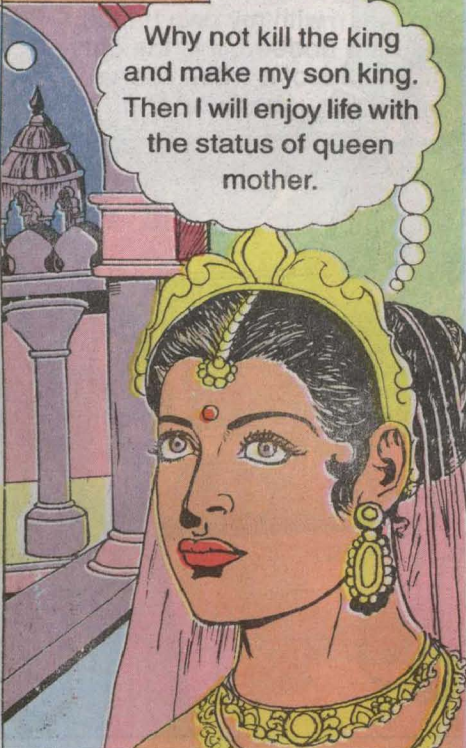
One day his queen Suryakanta thought—

My husband is so engrossed in religious activities that he has forgotten me. He neither comes to the palace nor talks to me any more. It is as if he has broken relationship with me.



Thinking throughout the night she made a plan—

Why not kill the king and make my son king. Then I will enjoy life with the status of queen mother.



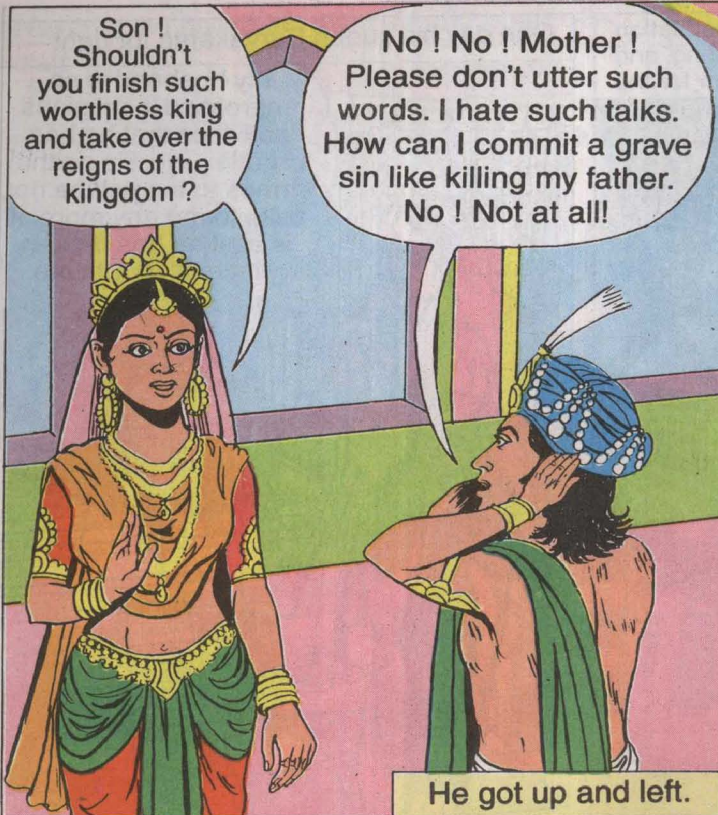
In the morning she met her son—

Son ! Your father has turned away from his duties as a king. He neither loves his family nor the people.

Yes mother ! His life has changed.

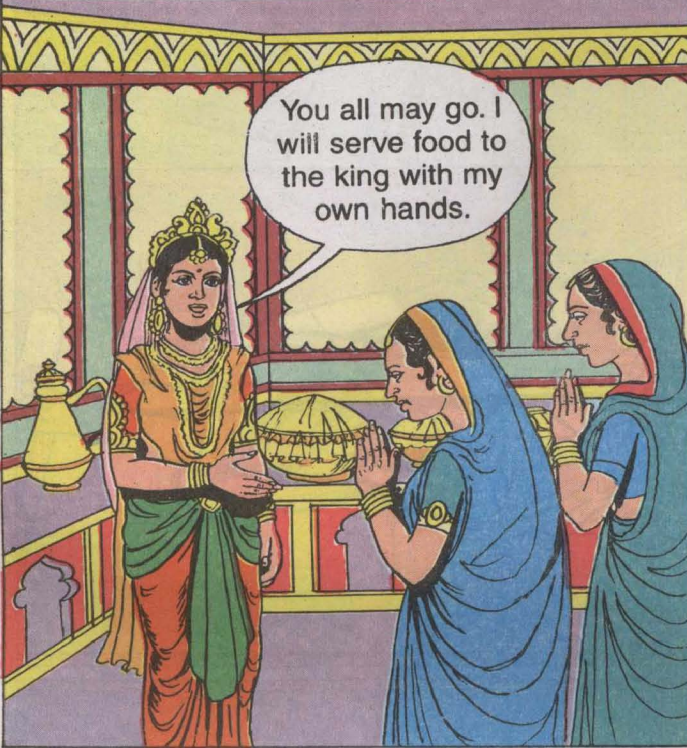




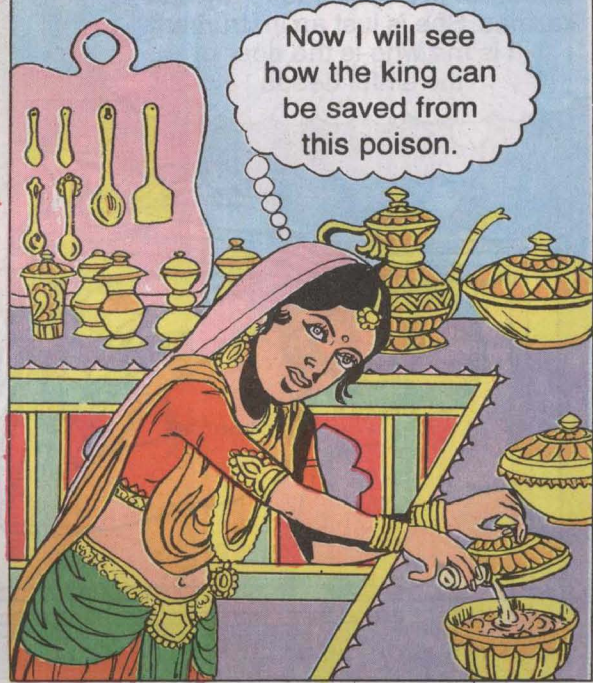




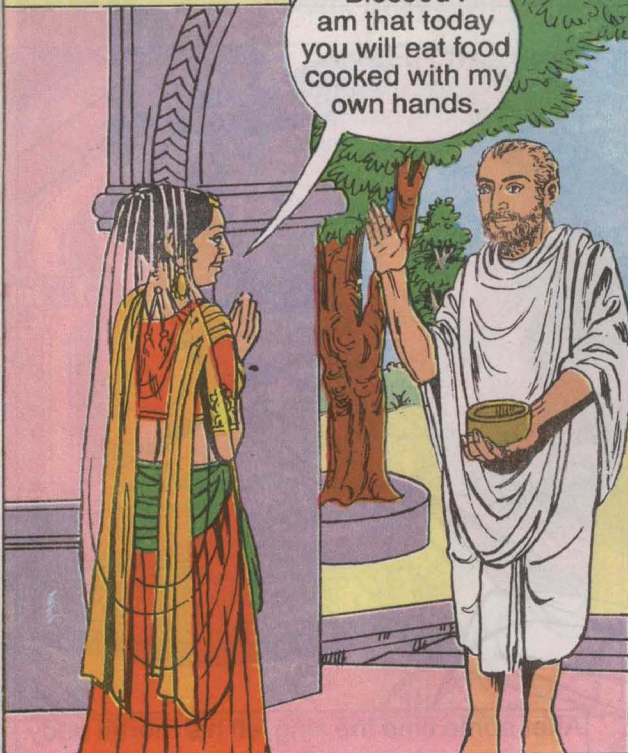
The queen got up early in the morning and cooked breakfast for the king. She asked the maids to leave—



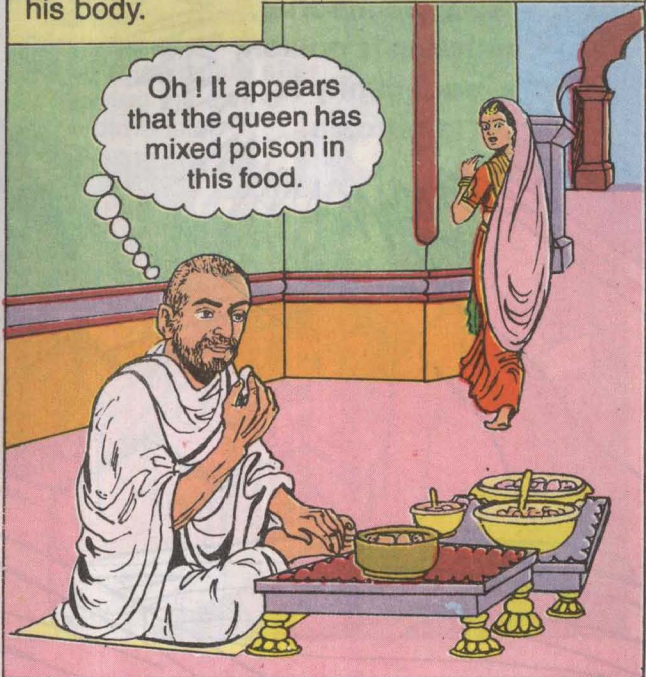
She then stealthily mixed potent poison in the food. She also sprinkled some poison on her dress.



The king entered the palace for breakfast. The queen expressed her love and devotion—



The king remained silent. He calmly took his seat. The queen served and the king started his breakfast. Within no time he had burning sensation throughout his body. He felt nauseated and blisters appeared on his body.





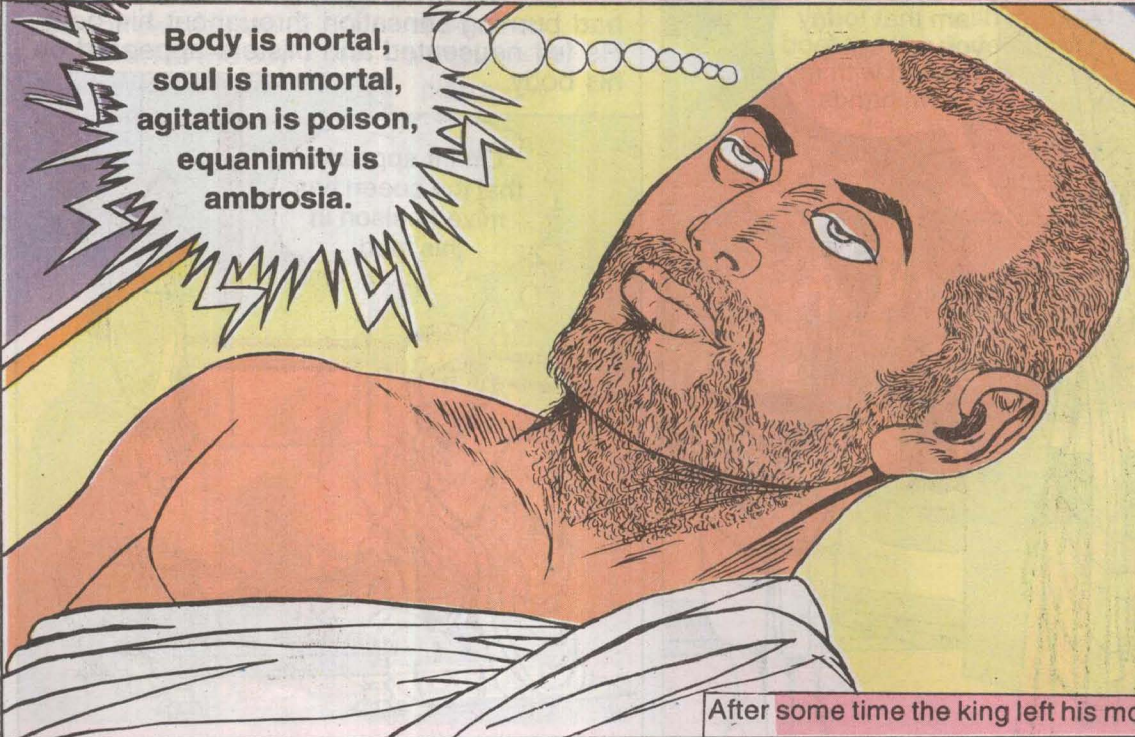
Without a word he got up and went to the hut. He lied still on the mattress

There is no use getting angry at someone. All pain is caused by one's own sins. The queen must be under an evil spell due to my bad karmas. She is just an instrument. It is me who is the doer of the sinful deeds.



The king endured that terrible pain with equanimity. The body was burning due to the poison but it was as if ambrosia was being showered within the mind. The king recalled the unforgettable statement of Keshikumar Shraman—

Body is mortal,  
soul is immortal,  
agitation is poison,  
equanimity is  
ambrosia.



After some time the king left his mortal body.

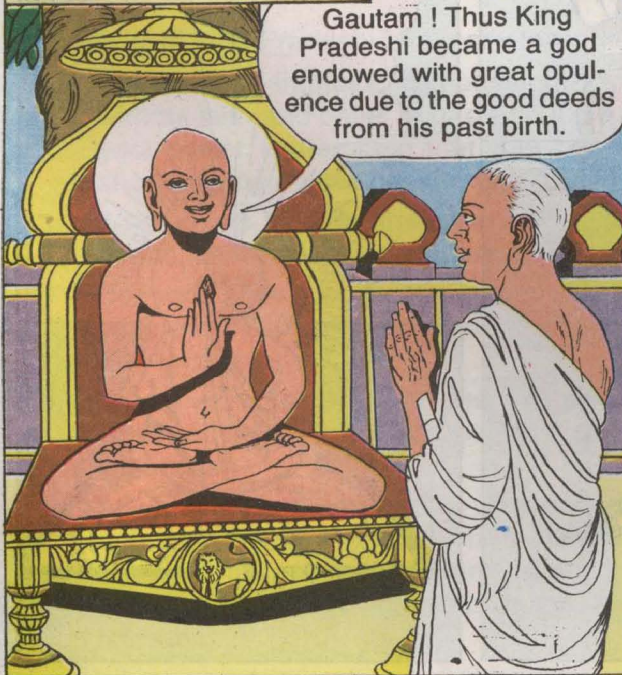


His soul reincarnated as sun-like radiant and impressive Suryaabh god in the first heaven.



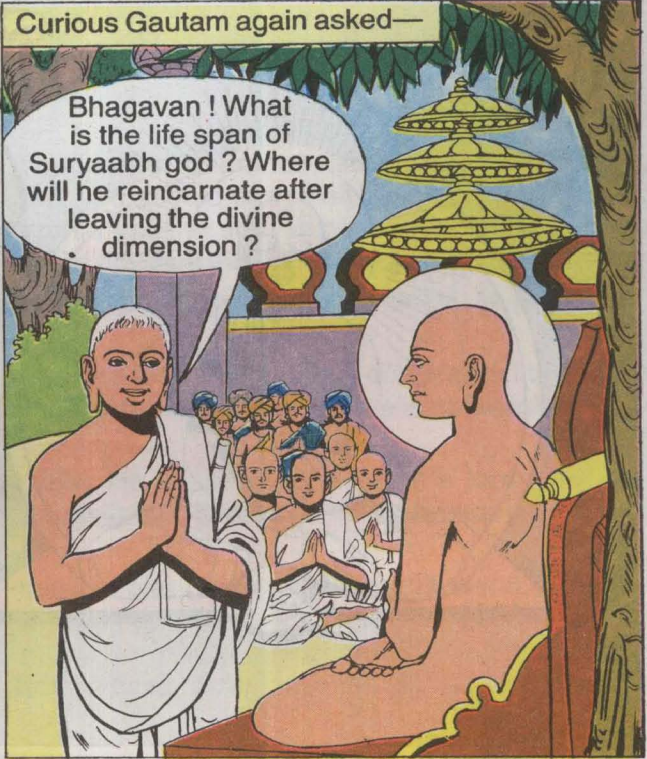
After narrating the story of the past birth of Suryaabh god to Gautam, Bhagavan Mahavir added—

Gautam ! Thus King Pradeshi became a god endowed with great opulence due to the good deeds from his past birth.



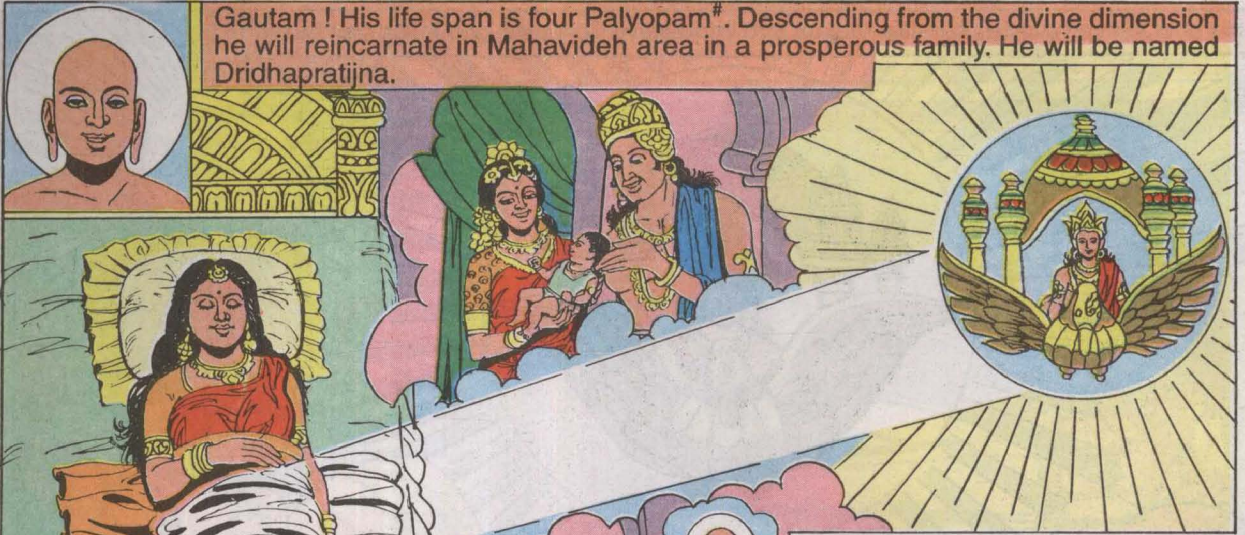
Curious Gautam again asked—

Bhagavan ! What is the life span of Suryaabh god ? Where will he reincarnate after leaving the divine dimension ?



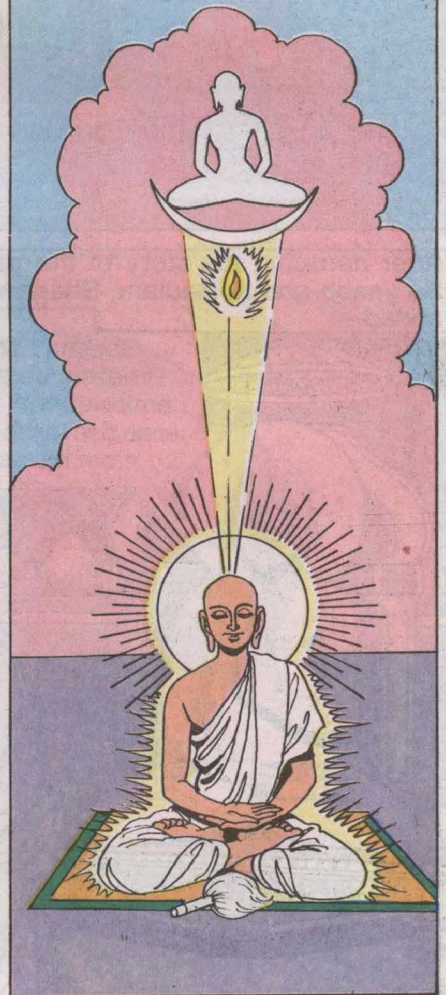
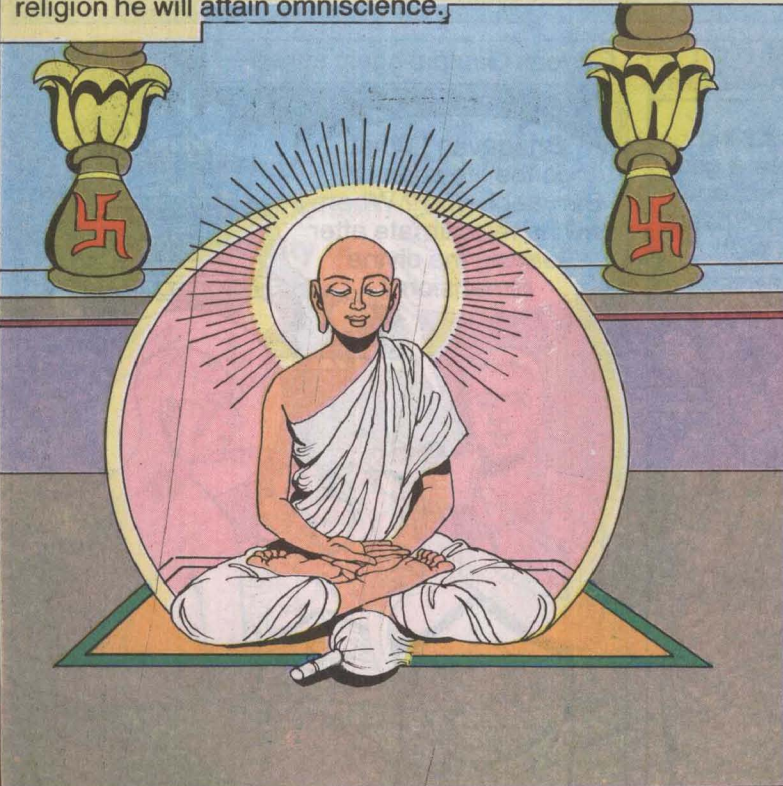


Gautam ! His life span is four Palyopam#. Descending from the divine dimension he will reincarnate in Mahavideh area in a prosperous family. He will be named Dridhapratijna.



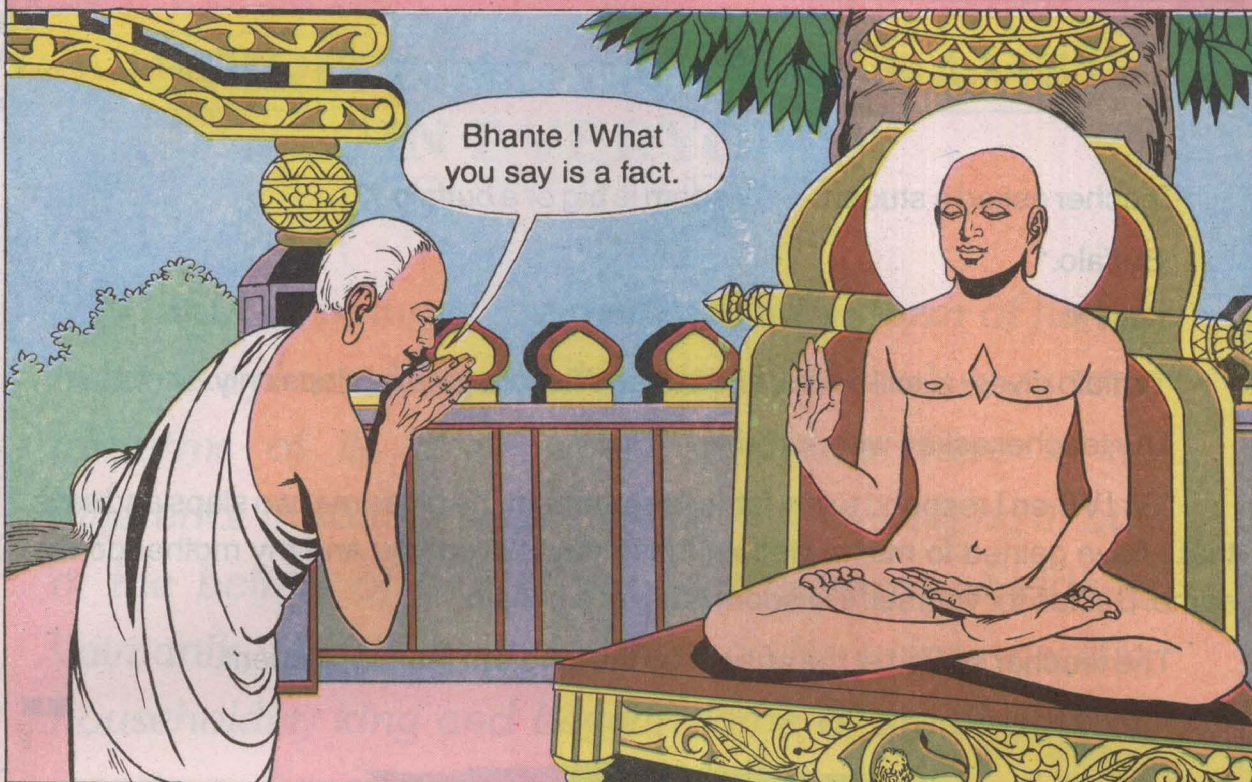
After shedding all his karmas he will get liberated.

Dridhapratijna will get initiated and after observing ascetic religion he will attain omniscience.





Gautam Swami was elated to hear the story of the past and future of King Pradeshi. He paid homage to Bhagavan Mahavir and said—



After paying homage and obeisance to Bhagavan Mahavir, Gautam resumed his contemplation and meditation.

**THE END**

## THE LESSON

The story of King Pradeshi has many lessons for us—

- ❑ Virtues like kindness, compassion, love, helpfulness, tolerance, etc. cannot be acquired without faith and belief in one's soul. Therefore, you should first of all believe in yourself and your power. Understand that your body is mortal but the soul within is immortal. The soul should not be defiled and tarnished for the sake of physical pleasure, enjoyment and comforts.
- ❑ A being has to suffer the consequences of his deeds. Therefore do not tread the path of evil deeds, oppression and immorality.
- ❑ Common man is under the stupor of ignorance and lust. When a true enlightened teacher is found he imparts right knowledge and shows the path of beatitude. There is no enlightenment without a guru.
- ❑ Whole world is friend for one with spiritual view. He is not angry even at a tormentor or a criminal. He forgives everyone. He is always equanimous. Therefore even physical pain cannot disturb him.
- ❑ All virtues are automatically acquired the moment one gains religious attitude. A cruel and oppressive king like Pradeshi, turned into a highly detached, forgiving and tolerant person under the influence of religion and pious company; so much so that when he was not angry at all with his queen who had poisoned him. Forgiveness for all, love for all, this is the sign of religion.



Don't laugh ! Try to understand....

## WISDOM IS BIG OR A BUFFALO ?

Teacher asked a student—"Wisdom is big or a buffalo ?"

"Buffalo."

"How?"

"Buffalo gives us milk, curd, and butter. Wisdom gets us slaps only."

The teacher asked with surprise—"How so?"

"Sir ! When I respond to my father's statement, he gives me two slaps and says that I have gained too much wisdom these days. Even you and my mother do the same. Decide for yourself if wisdom is big or a buffalo."

The teacher smiled at the answer by the ignorant (stupid) student.

## RENOUNCER : GREAT RENOUNCER

In a city arrived a great sage who had renounced the world. The citizens were benefitted by his pious company. But a rich merchant never visited him. When the sage inquired about the reason for his absence, someone informed him that he was intoxicated by his wealth. However, one day it so happened that the merchant attended the saint's discourse. The moment this merchant paid his homage, the sage stood and offered homage to the merchant. The audience was astonished. When asked about the reason for this strange behaviour, the sage replied —

"He is a great renouncer. I have merely renounced wealth and family, which are short lived. But this merchant has renounced the permanent unending spiritual bliss for the sake of perishable wealth. Indeed, he is a great renouncer and that is why I paid homage to him."

These taunting words opened the eyes of the merchant and he fell at the feet of the sage.



## **SPIRITUAL FLAME IS SAME IN EVERYONE**

*Soul or being is represented in the form of flame. In terms of knowledge and sentience all souls are same. In terms of its attribute of sentience there is no difference in souls irrespective of their belonging to any of the beings of any of the four genres—Siddhas; Vaimanik, Jyotishk and other gods; twins, ascetic, householder, king and beggar; large or small animal, insects and moths; different types of plants and trees including fruits, flowers and roots; infernal beings and Paramadharmik gods. Thus as entity soul is one. The visible differences like that of behavior and conduct is merely from the angle of paryaya or mode (body). In the illustration, at the center is soul in the form of a flame and that exists in every being.*

**—Sthaan 1, Sutra 1**

*(See illustration on back page)*

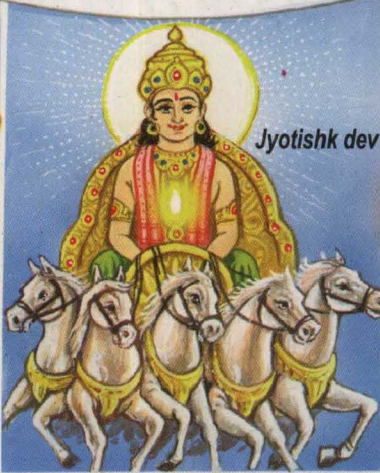


# SPIRITUAL FLAME IS SAME IN EVERYONE

Vaimanik dev



Siddhas



Jyotishk dev

Twins dev



Householder



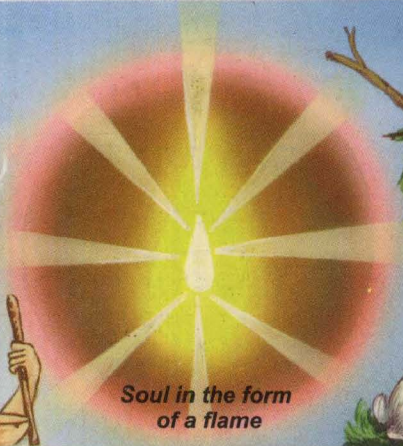
Ascetic



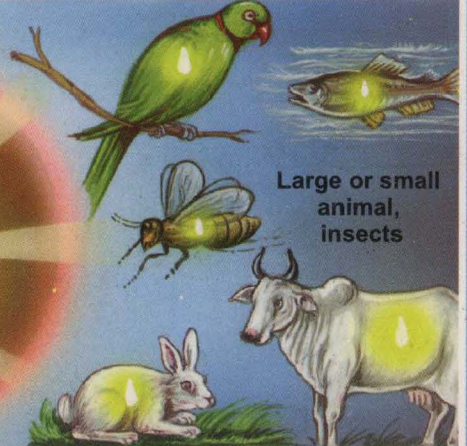
king



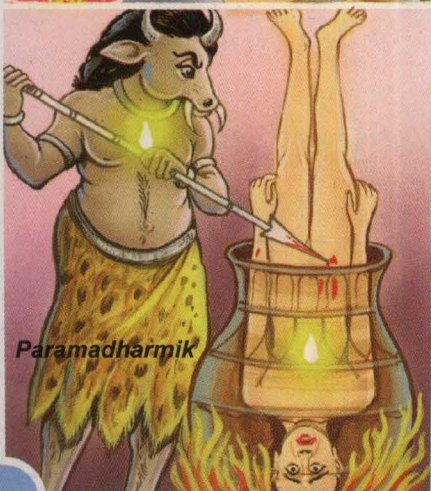
Beggar



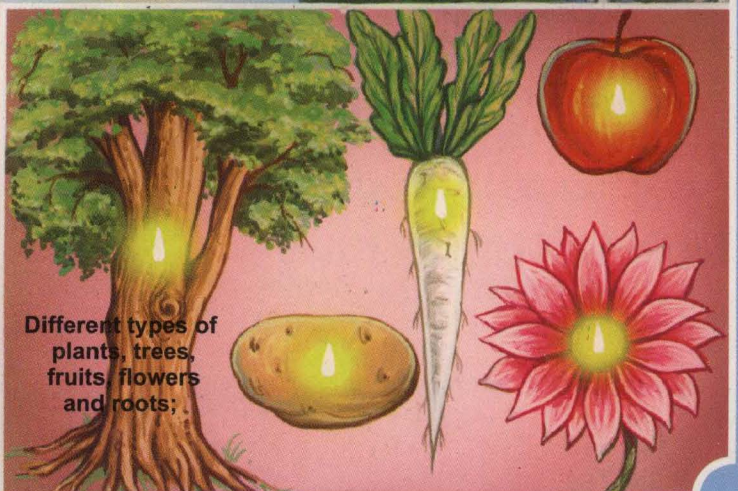
Soul in the form of a flame



Large or small animal, insects



Paramadharmik



Different types of plants, trees, fruits, flowers and roots;

See Detail Inside